

MURRAY'S MAGAZINE.

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How I placed a Concession in London.

I HAD become a Concessionnaire. A happy thought had one day struck me, on reading of the progressive tendencies of the Torriline Republic as evinced by its apparently unlimited willingness to allow foreign capital to be poured into it under any pretext and for any purpose. I learnt that the municipal authorities of the chief towns of the Republic were most anxious to encourage the improvement and embellishment of their townships, and I saw it curiously noted that, so far, throughout the Republic no proper system of waterworks had anywhere been constructed. Although not a business-man, I was fired by my idea, and, having a little capital, I determined to start at once for the Torriline Republic in order to secure a Concession—the Monopoly of the Construction of Waterworks. I do not wish to dwell on this part of my experiences at all, but merely say that, after the expenditure of some money and pains and much time, I met with success.

Having secured my Concession, I started back to England in high spirits; it was, after all, a valuable property, and I intended to realize at once, and, whilst keeping more or less in touch with the working of the Concession, so as to see that it was properly managed, retire upon my hardly earned laurels and rest—at any rate, in so far as that particular business was concerned—in peace.

Accordingly, the day after my arrival in London I sallied down to the City and called at the large and well-known financial establishment of Barter & Co. I knew the active working manager of the firm slightly, Mr. Dibbings, and sent in my card

to him. He immediately had me admitted, and affably asked me what my business might be. He heard me patiently out, and then raising his eyebrows and pursing his lips, he said—

"I don't wish you to lose your time, Mr. Smith—I don't wish you to lose your time. I will therefore tell you at once that I will have nothing to do with your Concession."

"Why not?" I said, a little testily.

"In the first place," he answered, "it is *Torriline*. I have no confidence whatever in *Torriline* business; I always have kept clear of it, and your proposals are not such as to induce me to change my views. I will not lend the name of *Barter & Co.* to anything which I do not consider a first-class sound business. I have the greatest possible objection to being made a stalking-horse by which to get at the public and attract them into putting their money into doubtful concerns; and, begging you to excuse me for being so outspoken, I must flatly decline to take any share in that you now offer to me."

"I am obliged to you for your straightforwardness, Mr. Dibbings," I replied; "but you will allow me to remark that in the first place, if I had not considered this a sound business, I never should have come to you about it at all; and in the second place, if you suppose I had intended to use you as a stalking-horse, you are entirely mistaken. I brought you a good business because I thought you would like it; but I don't *want* you—not in the least. I can get on perfectly well without you, and shall have no difficulty at all in finding money." I said this for effect, and only wished it were true.

Mr. Dibbings raised his eyebrows and slightly smiled. "I am very glad to hear it, my dear sir," he replied. "I meant no offence, I am sure; but I always say exactly what I think. Besides being better business, it saves time both for me and for those to whom I am speaking. Good day." And before I knew where I was, I found myself walking away from Messrs. *Barter & Co.* with a disagreeable feeling of having played my trump card, failed, and not knowing what to do next.

I went to a variety of establishments with whom I had a more or less extensive acquaintance, but at one and all was met with very much the same answer. Many of them asked if I had already a strong financial backing, because in that case (the very one, as I took the liberty of pointing out to them, in which I should not have had recourse to them) they also would not have any objection to taking a certain share. I got weary with ex-

plaining that I did not want them to take a direct part in the business themselves, but to bring it out upon the London market, to issue the shares to the public, to float the company, in fact. Not one of them would listen to it. One managing director only, seeing me, I suppose, look tired and disgusted when his refusal was added to the many others, advised me to go to brokers, and see what they thought of the matter, and whether possibly they would raise the capital on commission. "You would thus, you see," he said, "form a syndicate perhaps, which would set the thing going, meet the first engagements, and turn it into a company afterwards. There's lots of money sometimes to be made that way," said he reflectively,—"*lots!*"

"Ah! there is indeed," I replied. "Perhaps, Mr. Hardman," I added, as a sudden and happy afterthought, "Messrs. Guldridge" (that was the name of his bank) "would like to take part in it."

"Oh dear no!" he said decidedly. "I have already told you that it does not lie the least in our way of business. We don't *do* that kind of thing, my good sir, we don't *do* it."

"But what kind of things do you do?" I asked incredulously.

"Other things," said Mr. Hardman. But in spite of his mysterious answers and his shortness, he was more helpful than the others I had seen, and gave me a letter to Messrs. Bluff and Chowse, brokers, whose valuable aid I immediately sought.

"Mr. Chowse is out," said a clerk to whom I showed my letter. "I don't know where 'e's gone; 'e said 'e'd be in in ten minutes; p'raps 'is brother 'ud do."

As I knew neither Mr. Tommy Chowse, to whom the letter was addressed, nor his brother, I said I thought he *would* do. The clerk then asked me to step in to Mr. Tommy Chowse's room and wait for a minute or two, and Mr. Alfred would be down directly. The room in which I waited was a dingy little place looking out upon one of those narrow lanes in the City which give one the idea instinctively that they are crammed with wealth: it was furnished with a biggish writing-table covered with correspondence, financial papers, prospectuses, and such articles of the trade, two chairs, and one of the Exchange Telegraph self-recording instruments, which kept on an alternate whirring and excited ticking as of an irritated wood-pecker continually frustrated by a particularly hard piece of bark. As I was amusing myself by trying to learn some news from the tape-like paper ejected by the machine, the door

opened, and in walked a tall gentlemanly man with, of course, his hat on, and a most faultlessly spick-and-span hat it was.

"Good morning, sir," he said, in rather an abrupt way, "what can I do for you?"

"I have a letter from Mr. Hardman," I replied, handing it to him; "perhaps you would glance through it before I state my business."

It was only a few lines long, but he took as many minutes to read them, and he just once gave me a keen rapid glance as he was reading. I was rather surprised at his taking so long in reading so little, when he said,

"Oh! I beg your pardon; I'm very busy this morning, and was thinking of something else. Ah! this letter from Hardman—ye-e-s. Well! what do you expect us to do?"

This abrupt conclusion a little disconcerted me. "This Concession," I began—

"Hardman says nothing about a Concession," he interrupted, "it's something about a Waterworks Company, or something of that sort."

"I'll explain, if you'll allow me," I replied, "unless indeed you're too busy, in which case I'll call to-morrow and see your brother."

"No, no!" he said, "you'd better shortly explain to me what it *is* you want; I'll talk it over with my brother, and let you know to-morrow what we think. Fire away."

I shortly and concisely stated to him what my Concession was, and what I now wished to do with it. As I drew to the end of my discourse I saw a twinkle in his eye and a quiver at the corners of his mouth, and the slight effort necessary for speaking was sufficient to cause him to lose control over the muscles of his face.

"A very good statement, sir," he said, breaking into a broad smile. "Might I ask if you have ever dealt in Concessions before?"

"No," I said, "I have not, never."

"You surprise me," he answered. "Well! if you'll kindly call in to-morrow at eleven in the morning, I'll tell you what we think."

As I went home I could not help reverting in my mind, over and over again, to what seemed to me to be his totally unnecessary smile. I half feared that, being unused to this kind of business, I might have made some foolish slip of expression

which might cause him to form a poor opinion of my business-like capacity. I searched my memory to think what it could be, but nothing occurred to me, and I tried to conclude (though with poor success) that it was only a smile of politeness.

The next morning when I presented myself I was immediately shown into the same room as before, and there found, seated one on each side of the writing-table, the two Messrs. Chowse.

"I'm afraid," said Mr. Tommy Chowse, cocking his hat back, after the morning greetings, "very much afraid that we can't start that Concession for you. It's not precisely our line. You've no one with you, have you? I mean you are sole Concessionnaire?"

"Yes," I replied, "I am quite alone." At this reply I thought I saw a scarcely perceptible wink pass between the brothers.

"Who did you speak to before you saw Hardman?" said Mr. Tommy.

"Many people," I answered; "amongst others Mr. Dibbings, of Barter & Co."

"Ah," he replied; "and what did *he* say?"

I told him what he had said, and again fancied I noticed a reciprocal wink of intelligence.

"Yes, well—you see, I don't know," said Mr. Tommy, "I'm afraid I agree with him. Dibbings's is a devilish good opinion. What do you think, Alf?"

"Devilish," replied Mr. Alfred rather emphatically. "Mr. Smith seems pretty confident about the business too!"

Mr. Tommy seemed to look upon this answer as conclusive.

"I'm really beastly sorry," said he, "and I'm sure I don't want to discourage you or put you in a fix; I'm afraid we aren't the people for you—that's all."

I thought there was some indecision in his voice, and so, remembering also the winks I had noticed, I began to hold forth on the merits of my Concession with eloquence: but it was no use; the more I talked, the more decided he seemed to grow that he would have nothing to do with it.

"Well, gentlemen," I said, after trying my very best to move them, "I will trouble you no more; but allow me to say that I am quite sure you will one day regret this as a lost opportunity."

"May be!" replied Mr. Tommy. "But although I can't do the business for you, I'm always glad to see a good chap, or to help him. I'll give you a note to a friend of mine who is pretty good at the kind of thing, and if you'll look round

any day at lunch time I'll be delighted to see you, or at any time give you a bit of friendly advice, if you want it."

I caught at this with pleasure, for I was beginning to look with dread upon the impossibility of meeting the engagements I had taken in the Torriline Republic and of seeing my Concession lapse; and when I left the office of Messrs. Bluff and Chowse, I determined to be a pretty frequent caller there in the future. Mr. Tommy's letter was addressed to Rowley Flasher, Esq.

The result of my enquiries about him was not very encouraging, in the sense that although no one said any harm of Mr. Flasher, I could not make out that he had any great influence, nor that he had ever been particularly successful. Many people told me he was an "awfully clever chap," "a wonderful fine talker," and a few seemed to know of some big concerns which he had nearly launched, and in treating which he had shown very considerable "smartness." On the whole, I concluded I had better pluck up my courage, smarten up my wits, and go for Mr. Rowley Flasher. I found him to be a tall thin man, with the pale face and light blue eyes which seem so common amongst City men, and frequently to accompany a talent for smartness. I gave him Mr. Tommy's note, and in answer to his questions, which were wonderfully to the point, very soon explained my business to him.

"Wait a minute, please," he said suddenly, rising from his chair, and commencing to walk rapidly up and down the room with his hands in the side-pockets of his coat. I watched him in silence for a few minutes, when he as suddenly stopped, turned towards me, and began to speak.

Then I sat in a state of alternate astonishment and rapt admiration. He began by speaking quietly of the business itself, running through a light sketch of what it was, far better than I could have done myself; then he went on to develop a whole scheme of how it was to be set going in England; how this machine-factory, that engineer, the other contractor, and so on, must be interested; how thus certain great financial houses could be led to support it. Passing on to the future formation of a company, he waxed warm and eloquent:

"This, sir," he said, "is more than a mere business speculation; it is a great patriotic work. Through it we shall effect the spread of English ideas, and let in a flood of light and civilization upon countries now in a state of primitive barbarity. From this point of view we must approach men who, shrinking from

business as a rule, will, nevertheless, consent to sit on the Board of so great an undertaking as is yours."

He went on to propose that we should construct a variety of boards; a political board, a technical board, and a financial board. Lord Salisbury would be the chairman of the one, Lord Armstrong of the other, Lord Rothschild of the third. It might possibly, he thought, be better to turn the affair into an international concern; there was quite room enough for everybody, and the Torrilone Government was, politically, so suspicious. And so he went leading me through Elysian fields of imaginary prosperity, until I saw myself as rich as Midas, and holding the destinies of nations in the hollow of my hand. Considering, he said, that almost the entire labour would fall upon him, and that the whole business would be mounted and set going by introductions coming through him, it was only fair that we should go half-and-half into the business, for expenses as for profits. I did not consent to this until I had had a day or two for reflection, and had taken as impartial advice as I could manage to obtain.

When the business relations between us had thus been satisfactorily settled, we set to work. Mr. Rowley Flasher was a very much occupied man, and could not devote all his time to this one business; but he took the leadership, I acting under his direction. I was at first for obtaining the promises of the great men he had mentioned to serve as chairmen of the different boards, and then, with the great advantage which would be lent by their names, to return to the big financial houses again, and see whether they would not think better of it. But he would not hear of it; I had already hawked the Concession about too much, he said; we should get it depreciated, he preferred doing things quietly. We did things so quietly, that I remained idle, though anxious, for days, until one morning he said that if I would accompany him to a friend of his, I should see that we had made more progress than I supposed. The name of his friend was Croker; on our way to his office he explained to me that he was a man of enormous influence; one of the very first Company-promoters in London.

"And now do take care, Smith," he besought me. "You're not much accustomed to this kind of work, and I am really so awfully afraid of your letting yourself in. The best thing you can do is to keep your mouth shut. I will tell you honestly that I wouldn't take you with me, only as the Concession is originally yours, I want you as a kind of confirmation of what I

say. I don't mean to be rude, only Croker is as sharp as a needle, and will be through and through and in and out of every word you say, and before you know it you may have compromised everything. I'll talk ; you look confirmation."

These warnings, upon which Flasher rang the changes all the way, made me feel some little trepidation when we entered Croker's offices. We were immediately shown into his own room, which was adjoining a much larger one in which several persons were sitting, "doing the antechamber." Croker and Flasher seemed to be old friends ; they shook hands cordially, and I was well received on Flasher's introduction. We came in, in the midst of an incident which interested me so much that I think it is worth noting. A poor, common-looking man was there, to whom Croker addressed himself again, when he had finished greeting us.

"Well, my good man," he said with resignation in his voice, "let's hear it again."

The man then gave a laborious explanation of a method he had invented of making trousers by machinery without a seam in them. He said no one else could make them like that—that it had cost him years of thought, and that he would sell it to Mr. Croker for a sum of money down.

"But how," said Croker, "do you suppose I am going to make anything out of that?"

"Oh! Well!" said the man, "that's your look-out! This is a first-class way of cutting trousers, and saving cloth ; I know as there's no one else can do it. And I've brought it to you. Just you look here," and he went off again into his laborious explanation right from the very beginning.

Croker touched a bell which summoned a clerk. Then quite politely cutting his interlocutor short, he asked him to follow the clerk and explain the matter carefully to him : the clerk would write the explanation down, and he himself would be able to study it to better effect. The man, as he turned away, grumbled out something about preferring to deal with principals, and he left the room looking rather disconsolate.

"It's a perfectly awful waste of time!" exclaimed Croker, when we were alone ; "what the deuce can I do with a thing of that sort? Those kind of chaps are such fools ; they are created, I do really believe, for the sole purpose of tempting one to make bogus companies. But I am always sorry for them, and treat them well."

Mr. Croker—who was not a prepossessing-looking man, being small and dirty, and blessed with a squint—could not have said anything which could have set me more in his favour. I could not, in my mind, help comparing him with certain men whose co-operation I had been forced to accept in the Torriline Republic, and congratulating myself on being an Englishman, and having to deal with my own countrymen, honest and compassionate. We now immediately began to talk over my business, with which Croker evidently had already a general acquaintance. Flasher did most of the talking, and wonderfully well he did it too, Mr. Croker every now and then asking a question, or taking a note.

"That'll do," he said at last; "and what do Eccles and Dumper say to it?"

"Most satisfactory," answered Flasher. "They are red-hot to support it."

This answer nearly made me jump, for Eccles and Dumper's is one of the biggest firms of contractors in the world. With great effort I suppressed all sign of pleasure and surprise, and looked carelessly in front of me, as if this welcome piece of news were quite ancient history to me. Indeed I had to continue the effort as Flasher brought other names, both in the engineering line and financial, which were equally surprising and delightful. Now and then Croker looked at me as if for confirmation, but knowing nothing and remembering Flasher's advice, I looked much and did not open my lips.

"Well," said Croker, after some time, "it all seems in capital trim. I'm afraid I have no more time this morning; come back to-morrow, will you? and I'll tell you what I propose."

Returning from Croker's office, I simultaneously congratulated Rowley Flasher on the extraordinary progress he had made, and reproached him for having kept me so much in the dark. "You ought at least," I said, "to have told me about Eccles and Dumper. I could have gone and seen them, and it would have been much more effective if I could have explicitly confirmed what you said, instead of sitting there like a stuck pig."

"You acknowledge yourself I have done the thing thoroughly well so far," said Flasher, "and I really must beg of you to allow me to conduct this business as I consider best. I must also ask you to take no steps without my consent. You do not know what smart men you have to deal with. On no account go and see Eccles and Dumper; I am arranging with them,

and if you interfere, things will only get muddled. You *must* have confidence in me." He spoke so decidedly, and had managed so successfully, that I thought better not to take offence at the implied rudeness of his speech, but to submit.

The next morning we went back to Croker's office, and found that gentleman in a state of high delight. "We can do it, Rowley, my boy!" he cried; "we have only to talk out details a bit now, and put things down on paper. I can see my way."

They talked a great deal and a long while, I sitting by most of the time in the quality of a listener. In fact, they only referred to me once, and then they utterly disagreed with my answer, and refused to follow my advice.

"What," asked Rowley Flasher, "what capital do you think we shall want, remembering of course that you must add a good lot on for working capital, as the business may not pay in the first year or two, and that financing requires a good percentage?"

I had my answer pat, for I had thought of all this before. "Say three hundred thousand pounds," I replied.

"Oh, nonsense, sir!" said Croker. "You haven't the least idea of the expense of floating companies, and you vastly underestimate the capital required for the business itself."

Flasher fully supported Croker's view, whilst I somewhat hotly disputed it. Croker himself appeared to take notes of my arguments at first, and then to enter into a few calculations. When he had finished them he broke in again.

"It can't be done under a million," he said shortly; "at least, I won't have anything to do with it under that. I can't afford to have my name connected with a badly launched business. You are at perfect liberty of course to take the thing out of my hands and go elsewhere with it." He followed up the impression which of course this made upon me by demonstrating the truth of his assertion, and at last I gave way to his superior authority.

This point being settled, they referred no longer to me, but drew up a plan between them as to the formation of a company. They entered into a variety of details which I could not very well follow, and presently came to the necessity of registering the Company.

"Oh, as to that," said Croker, "we only want the usual association of seven persons for a lawful purpose, and we'll

register at once. We'll get Clinker and Dance to draw up the memorandum. Do you agree, Mr. Smith, generally, to the terms? You will be paid fifty thousand pounds, of which twenty-five thousand in cash on the first call, and twenty-five thousand in shares. Naturally you will be a Director. Do you wish to name Directors?"

"No," I replied, "I don't."

"Very good!" answered Croker. "Then Flasher and I will name them. You had better leave all details to us. We will call a Board-meeting at the earliest opportunity, for the purpose of settling the purchase agreements and drawing up the prospectus, and we'll launch the Company as soon as possible. Please say, do you agree to the amount mentioned for purchase?"

"Oh, yes!" I said. "It is a fair price." I should think it was indeed; it surpassed my highest expectations.

"Very good!" said Croker. "Then good morning! I shall set to work at once."

When we left him, Flasher told me I had better not bother myself any more until I heard from him again. I should only work myself to no purpose. The matter was now in perfectly first-class hands, and would go on wheels. It was a week before I saw him again, and then only because I was asked to attend the first Board-meeting. I thought it much better not to interfere and get in the way of these excellent business men. I once meanwhile paid a call on Mr. Tommy Chowse, to thank him for his valuable introduction. He received my thanks in an off-hand manner, and seemed mightily tickled at something or other, which I could not quite make out.

I shall not easily forget that first Board-meeting. To my great annoyance Rowley Flasher got a telegram a few minutes before it began, which absolutely prevented him from attending it. "Awfully sorry I am—really," he protested; "but it can't be helped! It doesn't really much matter. Croker is a splendid chap to talk. You need only confirm what he says."

When I went into Croker's office I found eight men already there whom Croker introduced to me as future directors. The future Chairman bore a name well-known in society; and the names of two or three of the others were familiar to me as directors of various big companies.

"We had better get to business at once, gentlemen," said Croker, after a little desultory chatter. "We are most of us

pressed for time. In the first place, Mr. Smith, I must tell you that at a kind of preliminary meeting we had a day or two ago we decided to ask you to take your seat on the Board only after the Company is formed and all the purchase agreements, and so forth executed. You, being vendor, and we (the Company), purchasers, we think it not only looks better, but is better, leaves us all freer, to adopt that course. It seems to us the straightforward way to act. Do you agree?"

"I agree of course," I replied, "if you gentlemen are of that opinion. I object, however, to being kept in the dark as to what is going on, and must be kept fully informed."

"Of course," said the Chairman, in a pleasant bland voice, "Mr. Smith is right; he must be kept informed."

"No doubt whatever about it," said Croker, "Mr. Rowley Flasher will keep him fully informed. Then you *do* agree, Mr. Smith?"

"Oh, yes!" said I.

"Very well," continued Croker; "then, gentlemen, I will just run over the chief points again; Mr. Smith will correct me if I go wrong."

He talked rapidly and almost as well as Flasher. His estimates seemed to me rather exaggerated, but I did not care to interrupt him on what was, after all, a mere matter of opinion. But presently he glibly declared that I had received promises of support from Eccles and Dumper, and all the other firms whom Flasher had named.

"Oh, no!" I said, "you are perfectly mistaken. I never said anything of the kind. I don't even know the firms."

"Then you shouldn't have said you did," replied Croker; "either Flasher spoke and you confirmed him, or you spoke and Flasher confirmed you; it comes to precisely the same thing."

I could not answer this, for truly I had confirmed Flasher by my silence. I consoled myself by thinking that Flasher was all right, and would not have dared play fast and loose with the names of such big firms. No other incident occurred worth noting until the signature of the purchase agreement with me. Then all the directors congratulated me, we severally wished the business good luck, and the meeting broke up.

I was not asked to come to another. Rowley Flasher kept me informed of progress; the memorandum of association was signed; the Company registered; and prospectuses launched.

I was astonished to see that, according to these, seven hundred and twenty-five thousand pounds' worth of shares had already been taken up. I also saw that the vendor, Mr. Smith, had already extensive connections and had assured himself of a large trade.

"What do you mean by extensive connections?" I asked Flasher.

"Oh! I don't know," he replied. "The President and that kind of thing. One *must* gas a little in this sort of business."

I was also rather astonished to see that Messrs. Guldridge were to be the Bankers, and I made the remark.

"Oh, yes! we've got *them* of course," answered Flasher, and I could get no more explanation out of him on the subject.

I think what surprised me most was to hear that Barter and Co. were to bring the business out; not only because Mr. Dibbings had been so extremely positive with me, but it hardly seemed worth while for them to trouble themselves about it when seven hundred and twenty-five thousand out of the million were already subscribed. But about this Mr. Flasher treated me as much *de haut en bas* as before; he said the matter was now on quite a different footing, that Croker was a man of great standing and influence, and of course Barter would listen to *him*, and so on.

It was a few days after this, and only two before the subscription was to be opened by Barter & Co., that I received a letter from Eccles and Dumper, asking me to come and see them at once. I immediately went, and was received by a short dry little man, who made me a stiff bow, and asked me, point-blank, when we were left alone, whether I was responsible for the statement, industriously circulated in the City, that his firm was prepared largely to back the Toriline Waterworks Monopoly Company just about to be brought out.

"Certainly not," I answered. "I never stated anything of the sort."

"Kindly read those letters, Mr. Smith," said he.

I read them. They were written in various styles of composition, but all made the same statement, and asked the same question. In answer to their letters enquiring as to Mr. Smith's extensive connections, the correspondents were informed by letters signed by one or other of the Directors of the new Company, or by Mr. Hardman or Mr. Croker, that Mr. Smith had declared that Messrs. Eccles and Dumper were strongly

supporting the Torriline Waterworks Monopoly Company. They begged that this might be confirmed. I sat aghast.

"I!—I say so! Mr. Eccles—Sir—I assure you," I stammered, "I am absolutely innocent. But Mr. Flasher said—you know Mr. Flasher?"

"Not I, sir," replied Mr. Eccles; "never met him in my life."

"Good God, sir!" I cried, "not know Mr. Flasher! But Mr. Flasher——" I really feared to go on, I did not know in what net I might not become entangled. "What answer have you made to these letters?" I enquired at last, feebly.

"So far," said Mr. Eccles drily, "none whatever. I strongly advise you, sir, to go and see Mr. Flasher at once."

I did not require that advice twice. I flew as fast as a hansom cab could take me to Flasher's office, and let forth the vials of my wrath and fear upon that gentleman. He took no more notice of my objurgations than if I had been in an adjoining planet. He heard me out to the end; then he shot one glance at me and muttered "D——d fool!" and I overheard him, as he left the room, saying "overtalked myself, as usual,"—and he left me alone.

I remained there, not knowing what to do, until he returned. "I've squared Eccles," he said unpleasantly; "you entirely misunderstood the whole thing. I told you not to go there. That slip will have cost a pretty penny. Don't go meddling any more without consulting me! All you've got to do is to keep out of the way."

"Look here!" I said decidedly. "Look here, Flasher! Is this business all square? I won't have my name, for fifty thousand, or five hundred thousand pounds, mixed up in anything shady. I'll write to the papers as Concessionnaire, and declare that false statements have been made."

"Mr. Smith," said Flasher, in a stately manner, "I will not presume, whatever my suspicions may be, to question your motives in behaving in this extraordinary way at the last hour. I will not talk to you in your present state of mind. If you have suspicions, pray go and talk them over with Clinker and Dance; it's their business. I really have not time."

I left him on the spot, and went straight to Clinker and Dance. They reassured me; they explained to me the prospectus throughout, and reminded me of the misunderstanding about Flasher's statements at the Board-meeting at which their representative had been present. They smoothed me down and

flattered me up, and fully persuaded me that I had been quite wrong and Flasher quite *bonâ fide*. Two days afterwards Barter & Co. brought the Company out. When they closed, the shares were at a fine premium. They fell below par a few days later, and then large purchases began to take place. They were enormously in demand. They rose above the first premium; I congratulated myself on a brilliant success. But my feeling of triumph soon disappeared: the financial papers attacked the whole business in general, and me and the Directors in person in a way which made me tingle. I wish at once to tell the truth as shortly as I can, dupe and fool though it may make me appear. I learnt it all from one of Clinker and Dance's chief clerks, an honest little chap with whom I became intimate. It was one day when I was complaining bitterly to him, and declaring I would bring an action for libel against the "*Financial Planet*," a leading City paper, that this man, whose name was Twigger, strongly advised me to drop any idea of the sort at once, and keep quiet. "If not," he said, "you will run into a nasty job which you may never get clear of. Lie still now, and at the outside in a few months' time the whole thing will be forgotten; my strong advice to you is not to risk a storm." Then by dint of much persuasion and by swearing secrecy I managed to induce him to reveal the whole thing to me.

It appeared that Croker and Flasher had both made very large sums of money indeed, so had Messrs. Guldridge as a bank, Mr. Hardman personally, Barter & Co., Bluff and Chowse, and others.

"At that Board-meeting at which you were," said Mr. Twigger, "you ought to have had some friend with you a little bit up to the business; you were kept out of the Board on a pretext of honour. The real reason, you know, was that they didn't want you to know what was going on; you had shown yourself touchy about honour and all that kind of thing, and might have got in their way."

"Oh!" I murmured mechanically, "got in their way!"

"Just so, sir!" continued Mr. Twigger. "There was the memorandum of association to be signed, and all kinds of bogus agreements to be got up to be palmed off on the public. Seven hundred and twenty-five thousand pounds had been subscribed before the prospectus was issued. You perhaps do not know that you subscribed for twenty-five thousand of that?"

"No," I answered feebly, "I had no idea of it."

"Ah!" said Mr. Twigger, "yes, the twenty-five thousand pounds in shares which was part of the price given you—they were included. Of the other seven hundred thousand, Mr. Croker and Mr. Flasher took about three-quarters and the other gentlemen took the rest. It was," said Mr. Twigger reflectively, "about as smart a thing in promotion-money as ever I see arranged."

"Do you mean to say," I asked incredulously, "that not one single penny had really been subscribed? Why I saw a tremendous list of shareholders!"

"Shareholders!" said Mr. Twigger, pityingly. "Fiddlesticks, sir, begging your pardon! Men of straw all of them; nominees of Croker, Flasher, &c. No, sir! not one penny was subscribed. Bless you! there are some rich men come out of this job. Barters too! they were in the swim. The whole, or nearly the whole, of the other two hundred and fifty thousand they and Guldridges took up and held back. They couldn't have allotted one in ninety! The public had been played on before-hand—(Eccles and Dumper were squared by Mr. Flasher after you had seen them, and lent their names for a good consideration, but it was pretty touch and go *that* was; Mr. Eccles was real riled)—and there was a rush on Barters for the shares. Up they goes to a nice premium, and then Barters and Guldridges realised cleverly and made a tidy profit."

"Then there was a fall," I reminded him.

"There was, sir!" said Mr. Twigger with a grin, "brought about by bogus sales. Mr. Croker, and Mr. Flasher, et cetera, managed to buy up a good lot of what Barters had got rid of at a premium below par."

"Then there was a rise," I said.

"There was, sir!" said Mr. Twigger in the same voice, and with the same grin, "brought about by bogus purchases. The gentlemen have realized a good lot since; I think you may say they've let off quite three-quarters on the public now."

"But who did all the bogus buying and selling?" I inquired. "Brokers must have known what a vile trick they were playing!"

"Brokers know!" exclaimed Mr. Twigger, compassionately. "Oh, Lord! why it was Bluff and Chowse did most of it, and they turned a pretty penny. They had their agents and friends who helped too. They'd have liked to have worked you all by themselves, but they couldn't quite manage it, and were obliged to let in partners to take a share of you."

"Work me! a share of me!" I exclaimed warmly. "Really

Mr. Twigger, you seem to know an extraordinary deal. I am inclined to imagine that you are drawing on your imagination."

"Not a bit of it, sir," said Mr. Twigger, good-humouredly, "I am not surprised at your being riled. But you may take my word for it, it's all as true as gospel. Many of the men we've been talking about are clients of ours, and they've been chuckling about the business in at our place. Mr. Croker laughed a good deal over a 'trouser-scene' he'd got up, he said on purpose to make you think what a good honest chap he was."

"Then," I cried, my wrath rising again at the villainous way in which I had been gulled, "I'll expose the whole thing; my estimate was right. Only three hundred thousand pounds of capital was necessary, and now in order to swindle out big profits, these people have palmed off a million on the public. I'll be no party to it; I'll bring an action,—I'll——"

"Don't do it, sir," said Mr. Twigger persuasively. "You'll be sure to lose. Clinker and Dance can sail as close to the wind as ever you like, and never let their clients do anything which will make them guilty before the law. Besides they've so entangled you in it, that really, sir, begging your pardon, you might cut as bad a figure as any one."

I felt hopelessly discouraged; it seemed to me that I was wound round and round by a strong net from which I could not cut myself free. I gave vent to my feelings by pouring out a long invective upon the iniquity of financiers like the Barters and Guldridges, who rejected my business when it was honest, to fall upon it ravenously when it had become a swindle; who forced me into the hands of men like Flasher and Croker, seemingly for the pleasure of making money dishonourably.

"It is just like a conspiracy," I groaned.

'Not *like*, sir,' corrected Mr. Twigger, "it *is* a conspiracy; financial people form a kind of guild, and you can't work otherwise than the guild chooses; they play into each other's hands, and every one makes bigger profits than they otherwise would. I don't know if it is possible to do a business of your kind honestly and above-board from beginning to end, in the City now. Only we don't call it swindling, we call it smart business."

* * * * *

I have resolved never to touch a Concession again.

JOHN SMITH (A CONCESSIONNAIRE).

Derrick Vaughan—Novelist.

BY EDNA LYALL.

AUTHOR OF "DONOVAN," "WE TWO," "IN THE GOLDEN DAYS," "KNIGHT-ERRANT," &c.

"It is only through deep sympathy that a man can become a great artist."—LEWES'S *Life of Goethe*.

"Sympathy is feeling related to an object, whilst sentiment is the same feeling seeking itself alone."—ARNOLD TOYNBEE.

CHAPTER VII.

"Then in that hour rejoice, since only thus
Can thy proud heart grow wholly piteous,
Thus only to the world thy speech can flow
Charged with the sad authority of woe.
Since no man nurtured in the shade can sing
To a true note one psalm of conquering;
Warriors must chant it whom our own eyes see
Red from the battle and more bruised than we,
Men who have borne the worst, have known the whole,
Have felt the last abeyance of the soul."—F. W. H. MYERS.

ABOUT the beginning of August, I rejoined him at Ben Rhydding. The place suited the Major admirably, and his various baths took up so great a part of each day, that Derrick had more time to himself than usual, and 'At Strife' got on rapidly. He much enjoyed too the beautiful country round, while the hotel itself, with its huge gathering of all sorts and conditions of people, afforded him endless studies of character. The Major breakfasted in his own room, and, being so much engrossed with his baths, did not generally appear till twelve. Derrick and I breakfasted in the great dining-hall; and one morning, when the meal was over, we, as usual, strolled into the drawing-room to see if there were any letters awaiting us.

"One for you," I remarked, handing him a thick envelope.

"From Lawrence!" he exclaimed.

"Well, don't read it in here; the Doctor will be coming to read prayers. Come out in the garden," I said.

We went out into the beautiful grounds, and he tore open the envelope and began to read his letter as we walked. All at once I felt the arm which was linked in mine give a quick involuntary movement, and, looking up, saw that Derrick had turned deadly pale.

"What's up?" I said. But he read on without replying; and, when I paused and sat down on a sheltered rustic seat, he unconsciously followed my example, looking more like a sleep-walker than a man in the possession of all his faculties. At last he finished the letter, and looked up in a dazed, miserable way, letting his eyes wander over the fir-trees and the fragrant shrubs and the flowers by the path.

"Dear old fellow, what is the matter?" I asked.

The words seemed to rouse him.

A dreadful look passed over his face—the look of one stricken to the heart. But his voice was perfectly calm, and full of a ghastly self-control.

"Freda will be my sister-in-law," he said, rather as if stating the fact to himself than answering my question.

"Impossible!" I said. "What do you mean? How could——"

As if to silence me he thrust the letter into my hand. It ran as follows:—

"DEAR DERRICK,—In the last few days I have been down at the Flemings' place in Derbyshire, and fortune has favoured me, for the Merrifields are here too. Now prepare yourself for a surprise. Break the news to the governor, and send me your heartiest congratulations by return of post. I am engaged to Freda Merrifield, and am the happiest fellow in the world. They are awfully fastidious sort of people, and I do not believe Sir Richard would have consented to such a match had it not been for that lucky impulse which made me rescue Dick Fleming. It has all been arranged very quickly, as these things should be, but we have seen a good deal of each other—first at Aldershot the year before last, and just lately in town, and now these four days down here—and days in a country house are equal to weeks elsewhere. I enclose a letter to my father—give it to him at a suitable moment—but after all, he's sure to approve of a daughter-in-law with such a dowry as Miss Merrifield is likely to have.

"Ever yours,

"LAWRENCE VAUGHAN."

I gave him back the letter without a word. In dead silence we moved on, took a turning which led to a little narrow gate, and passed out of the grounds to the wild moorland country beyond.

After all, Freda was in no way to blame. As a mere girl she had allowed Derrick to see that she cared for him; then circumstances had entirely separated them; she saw more of the world, met Lawrence, was perhaps first attracted to him by his very likeness to Derrick, and finally fell in love with the hero of the season, whom every one delighted to honour. Nor could one blame Lawrence, who had no notion that he had supplanted his brother. All the blame lay with the Major's slavery to drink, for if only he had remained out in India I feel sure that matters would have gone quite differently.

We tramped on over heather and ling and springy turf till we reached the old ruin known as the Hunting Tower; then Derrick seemed to awake to the recollection of present things. He looked at his watch.

"I must go back to my father," he said, for the first time breaking the silence.

"You shall do no such thing!" I cried. "Stay out here, and I will see to the Major, and give him the letter too if you like."

He caught at the suggestion, and as he thanked me I think there were tears in his eyes. So I took the letter and set off for Ben Rhydding, leaving him to get what relief he could from solitude, space, and absolute quiet. Once I just glanced back, and somehow the scene has always lingered in my memory—the great stretch of desolate moor, the dull crimson of the heather, the lowering grey clouds, the Hunting Tower a patch of deeper gloom against the gloomy sky, and Derrick's figure prostrate on the turf, the face hidden, the hands grasping at the sprigs of ling growing near.

The Major was just ready to be helped into the garden when I reached the hotel. We sat down in the very same place where Derrick had read the news; and, when I judged it politic, I suddenly remembered with apologies the letter that had been intrusted to me. The old man received it with satisfaction, for he was fond of Lawrence and proud of him, and the news of the engagement pleased him greatly. He was still discussing it when, two hours later, Derrick returned.

"Here's good news!" said the Major, glancing up as his son approached. "Trust Lawrence to fall on his feet! He tells me the girl will have a thousand a year. You know her, don't you? What's she like?"

"I have met her," replied Derrick, with forced composure. "She is very charming."

"Lawrence has all his wits about him," growled the Major. "Whereas you——" (several oaths interjected). "It will be a long while before any girl with a dowry will look at you! What women like is a bold man of action; what they despise, mere dabblers in pen and ink, writers of poisonous sensational tales such as yours! I'm quoting your own reviewers, so you needn't contradict me!"

Of course no one had dreamt of contradicting; it would have been the worst possible policy.

"Shall I help you in?" said Derrick. "It is just dinner time."

And as I walked beside them to the hotel, listening to the Major's flood of irritating words, and glancing now and then at Derrick's grave resolute face, which successfully masked such bitter suffering, I couldn't help reflecting that here was courage infinitely more deserving of the Victoria Cross than Lawrence's impulsive rescue. Very patiently he sat through the long dinner. I doubt if any but an acute observer could have told that he was in trouble; and, luckily, the world in general observes hardly at all. He endured the Major till it was time for him to take a Turkish bath, and then, having two hours freedom, climbed with me up the rock-covered hill at the back of the hotel. He was very silent. But I remember that, as we watched the sun go down—a glowing crimson ball, half veiled in grey mist—he said abruptly, "If Lawrence makes her happy I can bear it. And of course I always knew that I was not worthy of her."

Derrick's room was a large, gaunt, ghostly place in one of the towers of the hotel, and in one corner of it was a winding stair leading to the roof. When I went in next morning I found him writing away at his novel just as usual, but when I looked at him it seemed to me that the night had aged him fearfully. As a rule, he took interruptions as a matter of course, and with perfect sweetness of temper; but to-day he seemed unable to drag himself back to the outer world. He was writing at a desperate pace too, and frowned when I spoke to him. I took up the sheet of foolscap which he had just finished and glanced at the number of the page—evidently he had written an immense quantity since the previous day.

"You will knock yourself up if you go on at this rate!" I exclaimed.

"Nonsense!" he said sharply. "You know it never tires me."

Yet, all the same, he passed his hand very wearily over his

forehead, and stretched himself with the air of one who had been in a cramping position for many hours.

"You have broken your vow!" I cried. "You have been writing at night."

"No," he said; "it was morning when I began—three o'clock. And it pays better to get up and write than to lie awake thinking."

Judging by the speed with which the novel grew in the next few weeks, I could tell that Derrick's nights were of the worst. He began, too, to look very thin and haggard, and I more than once noticed that curious "sleep-walking" expression in his eyes; he seemed to me just like a man who has received his death-blow, yet still lingers—half alive, half dead. I had an odd feeling that it was his novel which kept him going, and I began to wonder what would happen when it was finished.

A month later, when I met him again at Bath he had written the last chapter of 'At Strife,' and we read it over the sitting-room fire on the Saturday evening. I was very much struck with the book; it seemed to me a great advance on 'Lynwood's Heritage,' and the part which he had written since that day at Ben Rhydding was full of an indescribable power, as if the life of which he had been robbed had flowed into his work. When he had done he tied up the MS. in his usual prosaic fashion, just as if it had been a bundle of clothes, and put it on a side table.

It was arranged that I should take it to Davison—the publisher of 'Lynwood's Heritage'—on Monday, and see what offer he would make for it. Just at that time I felt so sorry for Derrick that if he had asked me to hawk round fifty novels I would have done it.

Sunday morning proved wet and dismal; as a rule the Major, who was fond of music, attended service at the Abbey, but the weather forced him now to stay at home. I myself was at that time no church-goer, but Derrick would, I verily believe, as soon have fasted a week as have given up a Sunday morning service; and having no mind to be left to the Major's company, and a sort of wish to be near my friend, I went with him. I believe it is not correct to admire Bath Abbey, but for all that 'the lantern of the west' has always seemed to me a grand place; as for Derrick, he had a horror of a 'dim religious light,' and always stuck up for its huge windows, and I believe he loved the Abbey with all his heart. Indeed, taking it only from a sensuous point of view, I could quite imagine what a relief he

found his weekly attendance here ; by contrast with his home the place was Heaven itself.

As we walked back, I asked a question that had long been in my mind ; "Have you seen anything of Lawrence?"

"He saw us across London on our way from Ben Rhydding," said Derrick steadily. "Freda came with him, and my father was delighted with her."

I wondered how they had got through the meeting, but of course my curiosity had to go unsatisfied. Of one thing I might be certain, namely, that Derrick had gone through with it like a Trojan, that he had smiled and congratulated in his quiet way, and had done his best to efface himself and think only of Freda. But as everyone knows—

"Face joy's a costly mask to wear,
'Tis bought with pangs long nourishèd
And rounded to despair,"

and he looked now even more worn and old than he had done at Ben Rhydding in the first days of his trouble.

However, he turned resolutely away from the subject I had introduced and began to discuss titles for his novel.

"It's impossible to find anything new," he said, "absolutely impossible. I declare I shall take to numbers."

I laughed at this prosaic notion, and we were still discussing the title when we reached home.

"Don't say anything about it at lunch," he said as we entered. "My father detests my writing."

I nodded assent and opened the sitting-room door—a strong smell of brandy instantly became apparent ; the Major sat in the green velvet chair, which had been wheeled close to the hearth. He was drunk.

Derrick gave an ejaculation of utter hopelessness.

"This will undo all the good of Ben Rhydding!" he said. "How on earth has he managed to get it?"

The Major, however, was not so far gone as he looked ; he caught up the remark and turned towards us with a hideous laugh.

"Ah, yes," he said, "that's the question. But the old man has still some brains, you see. I'll be even with you yet, Derrick. You needn't think you're to have it all your own way. It's my turn now. You've deprived me all this time of the only thing I care for in life, and now I turn the tables on you. Tit for tat. Oh !

yes, I've turned your d——d scribblings to a useful purpose, so you needn't complain!"

All this had been shouted out at the top of his voice and freely interlarded with expressions which I will not repeat; at the end he broke again into a laugh, and with a look, half idiotic, half devilish, pointed towards the grate.

"Good Heavens!" I said, "what have you done?"

By the side of the chair I saw a piece of brown paper, and, catching it up, read the address—"Messrs. Davison, Paternoster Row"—in the fireplace was a huge charred mass. Derrick caught his breath; he stooped down and snatched from the fender a fragment of paper slightly burned, but still not charred beyond recognition like the rest. The writing was quite legible—it was his own writing—the description of the Royalist's attack, and Paul Wharncliffe's defence of the bridge. I looked from the half-burnt scrap of paper to the side table where, only the previous night, we had placed the novel, and then, realising as far as any but an author could realise, the frightful thing that had happened, I looked in Derrick's face. Its white fury appalled me. What he had borne hitherto from the Major, God only knows, but this was the last drop in the cup. Daily insults, ceaseless provocation, even the humiliation of personal violence he had borne with superhuman patience; but this last injury, this wantonly cruel outrage, this deliberate destruction of an amount of thought, and labour, and suffering which only the writer himself could fully estimate—this was intolerable.

What might have happened had the Major been sober and in the possession of ordinary physical strength I hardly care to think. As it was, his weakness protected him. Derrick's wrath was speechless; with one look of loathing and contempt at the drunken man, he strode out of the room, caught up his hat, and hurried from the house.

The Major sat chuckling to himself for a minute or two, but soon he grew drowsy, and before long was snoring like a grampus. The old landlady brought in lunch, saw the state of things pretty quickly, shook her head and commiserated Derrick. Then, when she had left the room, seeing no prospect that either of my companions would be in a fit state for lunch, I made a solitary meal, and had just finished when a cab stopped at the door, and out sprang Derrick. I went into the passage to meet him.

"The Major is asleep," I remarked.

He took no more notice than if I had spoken of the cat.

"I'm going to London," he said, making for the stairs. "Can you get your bag ready? There's a train at 2.5."

Somehow the suddenness and the self-control with which he made this announcement carried me back to the hotel at Southampton, where, after listening to the account of the ship's doctor, he had announced his intention of living with his father. For more than two years he had borne this awful life; he had lost pretty nearly all that there was to be lost, and he had gained the Major's vindictive hatred. Now, half maddened by pain and having, as he thought, so hopelessly failed, he saw nothing for it but to go—and that at once.

I packed my bag, and then went to help him. He was cramming all his possessions into portmanteaux and boxes; the Hoffmann was already packed, and the wall looked curiously bare without it. Clearly this was no visit to London—he was leaving Bath for good, and who could wonder at it?

"I have arranged for the attendant from the hospital to come in at night as well as in the morning," he said, as he locked a portmanteau that was stuffed almost to bursting. "What's the time? We must make haste or we shall lose the train. Do, like a good fellow, cram that heap of things into the carpet-bag while I speak to the landlady."

At last we were off, rattling through the quiet streets of Bath, and reaching the station barely in time to rush up the long flight of stairs and spring into an empty carriage. Never shall I forget that journey. The train stopped at every single station, and sometimes in between; we were five mortal hours on the road, and more than once I thought Derrick would have fainted. However, he was not of the fainting order, he only grew more and more ghastly in colour and rigid in expression.

I felt very anxious about him, for the shock and the sudden anger following on the trouble about Freda seemed to me enough to unhinge even a less sensitive nature. 'At Strife' was the novel which had, I firmly believe, kept him alive through that awful time at Ber. Rhydding, and I began to fear that the Major's fit of drunken malice might prove the destruction of the author as well as of the book. Everything had, as it were, come at once on poor Derrick; yet I don't know that he fared worse than other people in this respect.

Life, unfortunately, is for most of us no well-arranged story

with a happy termination ; it is a chequered affair of shade and sun, and for one beam of light there come very often wide patches of shadow. Men seem to have known this so far back as Shakespeare's time, and to have observed that one woe trod on another's heels, to have battled not with a single wave, but with a "sea of troubles," and to have remarked that "sorrows come not singly, but in battalions."

However, owing I believe chiefly to his own self-command, and to his untiring faculty for taking infinite pains over his work, Derrick did not break down, but pleasantly cheated my expectations. I was not called on to nurse him through a fever, and consumption did not mark him for her own. In fact, in the matter of illness, he was always a most prosaic, unromantic fellow, and never indulged in any of the euphonious and interesting ailments. In all his life, I believe, he never went in for anything but the mumps—of all complaints the least interesting—and, may be, an occasional headache.

But all this is a digression. We at length reached London, and Derrick took a room above mine, now and then disturbing me with nocturnal paces over the creaking boards, but, on the whole, proving himself the best of companions.

If I wrote till Doomsday, I could never make you understand how the burning of his novel affected him—to this day it is a subject I instinctively avoid with him—though the re-written '*At Strife*' has been such a grand success. For he did re-write the story, and that at once. He said little ; but the very next morning, in one of the windows of our quiet sitting-room, often enough looking out despairingly at the grey monotony of Montague Street, he began at "Page 1, Chapter 1," and so worked patiently on for many months to re-make as far as he could what his drunken father had maliciously destroyed. Beyond the unburnt paragraph about the attack on Mondisfield, he had nothing except a few hastily-scribbled ideas in his note-book, and of course the very elaborate and careful historical notes which he had made on the "Rebellion," during many years of reading and research—for this period had always been a favourite study with him.

But, as any author will understand, the effort of re-writing was immense, and this, combined with all the other troubles, tried Derrick to the utmost. However, he toiled on, and I have always thought that his resolute, unyielding conduct with regard to that book proved what a man he was.

CHAPTER VIII.

"How oft Fate's sharpest blow shall leave thee strong,
With some re-risen ecstasy of song."—F. W. H. MYERS.

As the autumn wore on, we heard now and then from old Mackrill the doctor. His reports of the Major were pretty uniform. Derrick used to hand them over to me when he had read them; but, by tacit consent, the Major's name was never mentioned.

Meantime, besides re-writing 'At Strife,' he was accumulating material for his next book and working to very good purpose. Not a minute of his day was idle; he read much, saw various phases of life hitherto unknown to him, studied, observed, gained experience, and contrived, I believe, to think very little and very guardedly of Freda.

But, on Christmas Eve, I noticed a change in him—and that very night he spoke to me. For such an impressionable fellow, he had really extraordinary tenacity, and, spite of the course of Herbert Spencer that I had put him through, he retained his unshaken faith in many things which to me were at that time the merest legends. I remember very well the arguments we used to have on the vexed question of "Free-will," and being myself more or less of a fatalist, it annoyed me that I never could in the very slightest degree shake his convictions on that point. Moreover, when I plagued him too much with Herbert Spencer, he had a way of retaliating, and would foist upon me his favourite authors. He was never a worshipper of any one writer, but always had at least a dozen prophets in whose praise he was enthusiastic.

Well, on this Christmas Eve, we had been to see dear old Ravenscroft and his grand-daughter, and we were walking back through the quiet precincts of the Temple, when he said abruptly—

"I have decided to go back to Bath, to-morrow."

"Have you had a worse account?" I asked, much startled at this sudden announcement.

"No;" he replied, "but the one I had a week ago was far from good, if you remember, and I have a feeling that I ought to be there."

At that moment we emerged into the confusion of Fleet Street; but when we had crossed the road I began to remon-

strate with him, and argued the folly of the idea all the way down Chancery Lane.

However, there was no shaking his purpose ; Christmas and its associations had made his life in town no longer possible for him.

"I must at any rate try it again and see how it works," he said.

And all I could do was to persuade him to leave the bulk of his possessions in London, "in case," as he remarked, "the Major would not have him."

So the next day I was left to myself again with nothing to remind me of Derrick's stay but his pictures which still hung on the wall of our sitting-room. I made him promise to write a full, true, and particular account of his return, a *bonâ fide* old-fashioned letter, not the half-dozen lines of these degenerate days ; and about a week later I received the following budget—

"DEAR SYDNEY,—

"I got down to Bath all right, and, thanks to your 'Study of Sociology,' endured a slow and cold and dull and depressing journey with the thermometer down to zero, and spirits to correspond, with the country a monotonous white, and the sky a monotonous grey, and a companion who smoked the vilest tobacco you can conceive. The old place looks as beautiful as ever, and to my great satisfaction the hills round about are green. Snow, save in pictures, is an abomination. Milsom Street looked asleep, and Gay Street decidedly dreary, but the inhabitants were roused by my knock, and the old landlady nearly shook my hand off. My father has an attack of jaundice and is in a miserable state. He was asleep when I got here, and the good old landlady, thinking the front sitting-room would be free, had invited 'company,' *i.e.*, two or three married daughters and their belongings ; one of the children beats Magnay's 'Carina' as to beauty—he ought to paint her. Happy thought, send him and pretty Mrs. Espérance down here on spec. He can paint the child for the next Academy, and meantime I could enjoy his company. Well, all these good folks being just set-to at roast beef, I naturally wouldn't hear of disturbing them, and in the end was obliged to sit down too and eat at that hour of the day : the hugest dinner you ever saw—anything but voracious appetites offended the hostess. Magnay's future model, for all its angelic face, 'ate to repletion' like the fair American in the story. Then I went into my father's room, and shortly after he woke up and asked me to give him some Friedrichshall water, making no comment at all on my return, but just behaving as though I had been here all the autumn, so that I felt as if the whole affair were a dream. Except for this attack of jaundice, he has been much as usual, and when you next come down you will find

us settled into our old groove. The quiet of it after London is extraordinary. But I believe it suits the book, which gets on pretty fast. This afternoon I went up Lansdowne and right on past the Grand Stand to Prospect Stile, which is at the edge of a high bit of table-land, and looks over a splendid stretch of country, with the Bristol Channel and the Welsh hills in the distance. While I was there the sun most considerably set in gorgeous array. You never saw anything like it. It was worth the journey from London to Bath, I can assure you. Tell Magnay, and may it lure him down; also name the model aforementioned.

"How is the old Q.C. and his pretty little grandchild? That quaint old room of theirs in the Temple somehow took my fancy, and the child was divine. Do you remember my showing you, in a gloomy narrow street here, a jolly old watchmaker who sits in his shop-window and is for ever bending over sick clocks and watches? Well, he's still sitting there, as if he had never moved since we saw him that Saturday months ago. I mean to study him for a portrait; his sallow clean-shaved shrewd face has a whole story in it. I believe he is married to a Xanthippe who throws cold water over him, both literally and metaphorically; but he is a philosopher—I'll stake my reputation as an observer on that—he just shrugs his sturdy old shoulders, and goes on mending clocks and watches. On dark days he works by a gas jet—and then Rembrandt would enjoy painting him. I look at him whenever my world is particularly awry, and find him highly beneficial. Davison has forwarded me to-day two letters from readers of 'Lynwood.' The first is from an irate female who takes me to task for the dangerous tendency of the story, and insists that I have drawn impossible circumstances and impossible characters. The second is from an old clergyman, who writes a pathetic letter of thanks, and tells me that it is almost word for word the story of a son of his who died five years ago. Query: shall I send the irate female the old man's letter, and save myself the trouble of writing? But on the whole I think not, it would be pearls before swine. I will write to her myself. Glad to see you whenever you can run down.

"Yours ever,

"D. V."

"(Never struck me before what pious initials mine are)."

The very evening I received this letter I happened to be dining at the Probyn's. As luck would have it, pretty Miss Freda was staying in the house, and she fell to my share. I always liked her, though of late I had felt rather angry with her for being carried away by the general storm of admiration and swept by it into an engagement with Lawrence Vaughan. She was a very pleasant, natural sort of talker, and she always treated me as an old friend. But she seemed to me, that night, a little less

satisfied than usual with life. Perhaps it was merely the effect of the black lace dress which she wore, but I fancied her paler and thinner, and somehow she seemed all eyes.

"Where is Lawrence now?" I asked, as we went down to the dining-room.

"He is stationed at Dover," she replied. "He was up here for a few hours yesterday; he came to say good-bye to me, for I am going to Bath next Monday with my father, who has been very rheumatic lately—and you know Bath is coming into fashion again, all the doctors recommend it."

"Major Vaughan is there," I said, "and has found the waters very good, I believe; any day, at twelve o'clock, you may see him getting out of his chair and going into the Pump Room on Derrick's arm. I often wonder what outsiders think of them. It isn't often, is it, that one sees a son absolutely giving up his life to his invalid father?"

She looked a little startled.

"I wish Lawrence could be more with Major Vaughan," she said; "for he is his father's favourite. You see he is such a good talker, and Derrick—well, he is absorbed in his books; and then he has such extravagant notions about war, he must be a very uncongenial companion to the poor Major."

I devoured turbot in wrathful silence. Freda glanced at me.

"It is true, isn't it, that he has quite given up his life to writing, and cares for nothing else?"

"Well, he has deliberately sacrificed his best chance of success by leaving London and burying himself in the provinces," I replied drily; "and as to caring for nothing but writing, why he never gets more than two or three hours a day for it." And then I gave her a minute account of his daily routine.

She began to look troubled. "I have been misled," she said; "I had gained quite a wrong impression of him."

"Very few people know anything at all about him," I said warmly; "you are not alone in that."

"I suppose his next novel is finished now?" said Freda; "he told me he had only one or two more chapters to write when I saw him a few months ago on his way from Ben Rhydding. What is he writing now?"

"He is writing that novel over again," I replied.

"Over again? What fearful waste of time!"

"Yes, it has cost him hundreds of hours work; it just shows what a man he is that he has gone through with it so bravely."

"But how do you mean? Didn't it do?"

Rashly, perhaps, yet I think unavoidably, I told her the truth.

"It was the best thing he had ever written, but unfortunately it was destroyed, burnt to a cinder. That was not very pleasant, was it, for a man who never makes two copies of his work?"

"It was frightful!" said Freda, her eyes dilating. "I never heard a word about it. Does Lawrence know?"

"No, he does not; and perhaps I ought not to have told you, but I was annoyed at your so misunderstanding Derrick. Pray never mention the affair, he would wish it kept perfectly quiet."

"Why?" asked Freda, turning her clear eyes full upon mine.

"Because," I said, lowering my voice, "because his father burnt it."

She almost gasped.

"Deliberately?"

"Yes, deliberately," I replied. "His illness has affected his temper, and he is sometimes hardly responsible for his actions."

"Oh, I knew that he was irritable and hasty, and that Derrick annoyed him. Lawrence told me that, long ago," said Freda. "But that he should have done such a thing as that! It is horrible! Poor Derrick, how sorry I am for him! I hope we shall see something of them at Bath. Do you know how the Major is?"

"I had a letter about him from Derrick only this evening," I replied, "if you care to see it, I will show it you later on."

And by-and-by, in the drawing-room, I put Derrick's letter into her hands, and explained to her how for a few months he had given up his life at Bath, in despair, but now had returned.

"I don't think Lawrence can understand the state of things," she said wistfully. "And yet he has been down there."

I made no reply, and Freda, with a sigh, turned away.

A month later I went down to Bath and found, as my friend foretold, everything going on in the old groove, except that Derrick himself had an odd, strained look about him, as if he were fighting a foe beyond his strength. Freda's arrival at Bath had been very hard on him, it was almost more than he could endure. Sir Richard, blind as a bat, of course, to anything below the surface, made a point of seeing something of Lawrence's brother. And on the day of my arrival Derrick and I had hardly set out for a walk when we ran across the old man.

Sir Richard, though rheumatic in the wrists, was nimble of

foot and an inveterate walker. He was going with his daughter to see over Beckford's Tower, and invited us to accompany him. Derrick, much against the grain, I fancy, had to talk to Freda, who, in her winter furs and close-fitting velvet hat, looked more fascinating than ever, while the old man descanted to me on Bath waters, antiquities, &c., in a long-winded way that lasted all up the hill. We passed into the cemetery and mounted the tower stairs, thinking of the past when this dreary place had once been so gorgeously furnished. Here Derrick contrived to get ahead with Sir Richard, and Freda lingered in a sort of alcove with me.

"I have been so wanting to see you," she said, in an agitated voice. "Oh, Mr. Wharncliffe, is it true what I have heard about the Major? Does he drink?"

"Who told you?" I said, a little embarrassed.

"It was our landlady," said Freda; "she is the daughter of the Major's landlady. And you should hear what she says of Derrick! Why, he must be a downright hero! All the time I have been half despising him"—she choked back a sob—"he has been trying to save his father from what was certain death to him—so they told me. Do you think it is true?"

"I know it is," I replied gravely.

"And about his arm—was that true?"

I signed an assent.

Her grey eyes grew moist.

"Oh," she cried, "how I have been deceived, and how little Lawrence appreciates him! I think he must know that I've misjudged him, for he seems so odd and shy, and I don't think he likes to talk to me."

I looked searchingly into her truthful grey eyes, thinking of poor Derrick's unlucky love-story.

"You do not understand him," I said; "and perhaps it is best so."

But the words and the look were rash, for all at once the colour flooded her face. She turned quickly away, conscious at last that the midsummer dream of those yachting days had to Derrick been no dream at all, but a life-long reality.

I felt very sorry for Freda, for she was not at all the sort of girl who would glory in having a fellow hopelessly in love with her. I knew that the discovery she had made would be nothing but a sorrow to her, and could guess how she would reproach herself for that innocent past fancy, which, till now, had seemed

to her so faint and far-away—almost as something belonging to another life. All at once we heard the others descending, and she turned to me with such a frightened, appealing look, that I could not possibly have helped going to the rescue. I plunged abruptly into a discourse on Beckford, and told her how he used to keep diamonds in a tea-cup, and amused himself by arranging them on a piece of velvet. Sir Richard fled from the sound of my prosy voice, and, needless to say, Derrick followed him. We let them get well in advance and then followed, Freda silent and *distracte*, but every now and then asking a question about the Major.

As for Derrick, evidently he was on guard. He saw a good deal of the Merrifields and was sedulously attentive to them in many small ways; but with Freda he was curiously reserved, and if by chance they did talk together, he took good care to bring Lawrence's name into the conversation. On the whole, I believe loyalty was his strongest characteristic, and want of loyalty in others tried him more severely than anything in the world.

As the spring wore on it became evident to every one that the Major could not last long. His son's watchfulness and the enforced temperance which the doctors insisted on had prolonged his life to a certain extent, but gradually his sufferings increased and his strength diminished. At last he kept his bed altogether.

What Derrick bore at this time no one can ever know. When, one bright sunshiny Saturday, I went down to see how he was getting on, I found him worn and haggard, too evidently paying the penalty of sleepless nights and thankless care. I was a little shocked to hear that Lawrence had been summoned, but when I was taken into the sick room I realised that they had done wisely to send for the favourite son.

The Major was evidently dying.

Never can I forget the cruelty and malevolence with which his bloodshot eyes rested on Derrick, or the patience with which the dear old fellow bore his father's scathing sarcasms. It was while I was sitting by the bed that the landlady entered with a telegram, which she put into Derrick's hand.

"From Lawrence!" said the dying man triumphantly, "to say by what train we may expect him. Well?" as Derrick still read the message to himself; "can't you speak, you d——d idiot? Have you lost your d——d tongue? What does he say?"

"I am afraid he cannot be here just yet," said Derrick, trying

to tone down the curt message; "it seems he cannot get leave."

"Not get leave to see his dying father? What confounded nonsense. Give me the thing here;" and he snatched the telegram from Derrick and read it in a quavering, hoarse voice—

"Impossible to get away. Am hopelessly tied here. Love to my father. Greatly regret to hear such bad news of him."

I think that message made the old man realise the worth of Lawrence's often expressed affection for him. Clearly it was a great blow to him. He threw down the paper without a word and closed his eyes. For half an hour he lay like that, and we did not disturb him. At last he looked up; his voice was fainter and his manner more gentle.

"Derrick," he said, "I believe I've done you an injustice; it is you who care for me, not Lawrence, and I've struck your name out of my will—have left all to him. After all, though you are one of those confounded novelists, you've done what you could for me. Let some one fetch a solicitor—I'll alter it—I'll alter it!"

I instantly hurried out to fetch a lawyer, but it was Saturday afternoon, the offices were closed, and some time passed before I had caught my man. I told him as we hastened back some of the facts of the case, and he brought his writing materials into the sick room and took down from the Major's own lips the words which would have the effect of dividing the old man's possessions between his two sons. Dr. Mackrill was now present; he stood on one side of the bed, his fingers on the dying man's pulse. On the other side stood Derrick, a degree paler and graver than usual, but revealing little of his real feelings.

"Word it as briefly as you can," said the Doctor.

And the lawyer scribbled away as though for his life, while the rest of us waited in a wretched hushed state of tension. In the room itself there was no sound save the scratching of the pen and the laboured breathing of the old man; but in the next house we could hear some one playing a waltz. Somehow it did not seem to me incongruous, for it was "Sweethearts," and that had been the favourite waltz at Ben Rhydding, so that I somehow connected it with Derrick and his trouble; and now the words rang in my ears—

"Oh, love for a year, a week, a day,
But alas for the love that loves away."

If it had not been for the Major's return from India, I firmly

believed that Derrick and Freda would by this time have been betrothed. Derrick had taken a line which necessarily divided them, had done what he saw to be his duty ; yet what were the results ? He had lost Freda, he had lost his book, he had damaged his chance of success as a writer, he had been struck out of his father's will, and he had suffered unspeakably. Had anything whatever been gained ? The Major was dying unrepentant to all appearance, as hard and cynical an old worldling as I ever saw. The only spark of grace he showed was that tardy endeavour to add a codicil to his will. What good had it all been ? What good ?

I could not answer the question then, could only cry out in a sort of indignation, "What profit is there in his blood ?" But, looking at it now, I have a sort of perception that the very lack of apparent profitableness was part of Derrick's training, while if, as I now incline to think, there is a hereafter where the training begun here is continued, the old Major in the hell he most richly deserved would have the remembrance of his son's patience and constancy and devotion to serve as a guiding light in the outer darkness.

The lawyer no longer wrote at railroad speed ; he pushed back his chair, brought the codicil to the bed, and placed the pen in the trembling yellow hand of the invalid.

"You must sign your name here," he said, pointing with his finger ; and the Major raised himself a little, and brought the pen quaveringly down towards the paper. With a sort of fascination I watched the finely-pointed steel nib ; it trembled for an instant or two, then the pen dropped from the convulsed fingers, and with a cry of intolerable anguish the Major fell back.

For some minutes there was a painful struggle ; presently we caught a word or two between the groans of the dying man.

"Too late !" he gasped, "too late !" and then a dreadful vision of horrors seemed to rise before him, and with a terror that I can never forget he turned to his son and clutched fast hold of his hands : "Derrick !" he shrieked.

Derrick could not speak, but he bent low over the bed as though to screen the dying eyes from those horrible visions, and with an odd sort of thrill I saw him embrace his father.

When he raised his head the terror had died out of the Major's face ; all was over.

CHAPTER IX.

"To duty firm, to conscience true,
However tried and pressed,
In God's clear sight high work we do,
If we but do our best."—W. GASKELL.

Lawrence came down to the funeral, and I took good care that he should hear all about his father's last hours, and I made the solicitor show him the unsigned codicil. He made hardly any comment on it till we three were alone together. Then with a sort of kindly patronage he turned to his brother—Derrick, it must be remembered, was the elder twin—and said pityingly, "Poor old fellow! it was rather rough on you that the governor couldn't sign this; but never mind, you'll soon, no doubt, be earning a fortune by your books; and besides, what does a bachelor want with more than you've already inherited from our mother? Whereas, an officer just going to be married, and with this confounded reputation of hero to keep up, why, I can tell you he needs every penny of it."

Derrick looked at his brother searchingly. I honestly believe that he didn't very much care about the money, but it cut him to the heart that Lawrence should treat him so shabbily. The soul of generosity himself, he could not understand how any one could frame a speech so infernally mean.

"Of course," I broke in, "if Derrick liked to go to law he could no doubt get his rights; there are three witnesses who can prove what was the Major's real wish."

"I shall not go to law," said Derrick, with a dignity of which I had hardly imagined him capable. "You spoke of your marriage, Lawrence; is it to be soon?"

"This autumn, I hope," said Lawrence; "at least, if I can overcome Sir Richard's ridiculous notion that a girl ought not to marry till she's twenty-one. He's a most crotchety old fellow, that future father-in-law of mine."

When Lawrence had first come back from the war I had thought him wonderfully improved, but a long course of spoiling and flattery had done him a world of harm. He liked very much to be lionized, and to see him now posing in drawing-rooms, surrounded by a worshipping throng of women, was enough to sicken any sensible being.

As for Derrick, though he could not be expected to feel his

bereavement in the ordinary way, yet his father's death had been a great shock to him. It was arranged that after settling various matters in Bath he should go down to stay with his sister for a time, joining me in Montague Street later on. While he was away at Birmingham, however, an extraordinary change came into my humdrum life, and when he rejoined me a few weeks later, I—selfish brute—was so overwhelmed with the trouble that had befallen me that I thought very little indeed of his affairs. He took this quite as a matter of course, and what I should have done without him I can't conceive. However, this story concerns him and has nothing to do with my extraordinary dilemma, I merely mention it as a fact which brought additional cares into his life. All the time he was doing what could be done to help me he was also going through a most baffling and miserable time among the publishers; for 'At Strife,' unlike its predecessors, was rejected by Davison and by five other publishers. Think of this, you comfortable readers, as you lie back in your easy chairs and leisurely turn the pages of that popular story. The book which represented years of study and long hours of hard work was first burnt to a cinder. It was re-written with what infinite pains and toil few can understand. It was then six times tied up and carried with anxiety and hope to a publisher's office, only to reappear six times in Montague Street, an unwelcome visitor, bringing with it depression and disappointment.

Derrick said little, but suffered much. However, nothing daunted him. When it came back from the sixth publisher he took it to a seventh, then returned and wrote away like a Trojan at his third book. The one thing that never failed him was that curious consciousness that he *had* to write; like the Prophets of old, the "burden" came to him, and speak it he must.

The seventh publisher wrote a somewhat dubious letter: the book he thought had great merit, but unluckily people were prejudiced, and historical novels rarely met with success. However, he was willing to take the story, and offered half profits, candidly admitting that he had no great hopes of a large sale. Derrick instantly closed with this offer, proofs came in, the book appeared, was well received like its predecessor, fell into the hands of one of the leaders of Society, and, to the intense surprise of the publisher, proved to be the novel of the year. Speedily a second edition was called for; then, after a brief

interval, a third edition—this time a rational one-volume affair ; and the whole lot—6000 I believe—went off on the day of publication. Derrick was amazed ; but he enjoyed his success very heartily, and I think no one could say that he had leapt into fame at a bound.

Having devoured ‘At Strife,’ people began to discover the merits of ‘Lynwood’s Heritage’ ; the libraries were besieged for it, and a cheap edition was hastily published, and another and another, till the book, which at first had been such a dead failure, rivalled ‘At Strife.’ Truly an author’s career is a curious thing ; and precisely why the first book failed, and the second succeeded, no one could explain.

It amused me very much to see Derrick turned into a lion—he was so essentially un-lion-like. People were for ever asking him how he worked, and I remember a very pretty girl setting upon him once at a dinner-party with the embarrassing request—

“Now do tell me, Mr. Vaughan, how do you write your stories ? I wish you would give me a good receipt for a novel.”

Derrick hesitated uneasily for a minute ; finally, with a humorous smile, said—

“Well, I can’t exactly tell you, because, more or less, novels grow ; but if you want a receipt, you might perhaps try after this fashion :—Conceive your hero, add a sprinkling of friends and relatives, flavour with whatever scenery or local colour you please, carefully consider what circumstances are most likely to develop your man into the best he is capable of, allow the whole to simmer in your brain as long as you can, and then serve, while hot, with ink upon white or blue foolscap, according to taste.”

The young lady applauded the receipt, but she sighed a little, and probably relinquished all hope of concocting a novel herself ; on the whole, it seemed to involve incessant taking of trouble.

About this time I remember too another little scene, which I enjoyed amazingly. I laugh now when I think of it. I happened to be at a huge evening crush, and, rather to my surprise, came across Lawrence Vaughan. We were talking together, when up came Connington of the Foreign Office. “I say, Vaughan,” he said, “Lord Remington wishes to be introduced to you.” I watched the old statesman a little curiously as he greeted Lawrence, and listened to his first words : “Very glad to make your acquaintance, Captain Vaughan ; I understand that the author of that grand novel, ‘At Strife,’ is a brother of yours.” And poor Lawrence spent a *mauvais quart*

d'heure, inwardly fuming I know at the idea that he, the hero of Saspataras Hill, should be considered merely as "the brother of Vaughan, the novelist."

Fate, or perhaps I should say the effect of his own pernicious actions, did not deal kindly just now with Lawrence. Somehow Freda learnt about that codicil, and, being no bread-and-butter miss, content meekly to adore her *fiancé* and deem him faultless, she "up and spake" on the subject, and I fancy poor Lawrence must have had another *mauvais quart d'heure*. It was not this, however, which led to a final breach between them; it was something which Sir Richard discovered with regard to Lawrence's life at Dover. The engagement was instantly broken off, and Freda, I am sure, felt nothing but relief. She went abroad for some time, however, and we did not see her till long after Lawrence had been comfortably married to £1500 a year and a middle-aged widow who had long been a hero-worshipper, and who, I am told, never allowed any visitor to leave the house without making some allusion to the memorable battle of Saspataras Hill and her Lawrence's gallant action.

For the two years succeeding the Major's death, Derrick and I, as I mentioned before, shared the rooms in Montague Street. For me, owing to the trouble I spoke of, they were years of maddening suspense and pain; but what pleasure I did manage to enjoy came entirely through the success of my friend's books and from his companionship. It was odd that from the care of his father he should immediately pass on to the care of one who had made such a disastrous mistake as I had made. But I feel the less compunction at the thought of the amount of sympathy I called for at that time, because I notice that the giving of sympathy is a necessity for Derrick, and that when the troubles of other folk do not immediately thrust themselves into his life he carefully hunts them up. During these two years he was reading for the Bar—not that he ever expected to do very much as a barrister, but he thought it well to have something to fall back on, and declared that the drudgery of the reading would do him good. He was also writing as usual, and he used to spend two evenings a week at Whitechapel, where he taught one of the classes in connection with Toynbee Hall, and where he gained that knowledge of East-end life which is conspicuous in his third book—"Dick Carew." This, with an ever increasing, and often very burdensome, correspondence, brought to him by his books, and with a fair share of

dinners, "At Homes," and so forth, made his life a full one. In a quiet sort of way I believe he was happy during this time. But later on, when, my trouble at an end, I had migrated to a house of my own, and he was left alone in the Montague Street rooms, his spirits somehow flagged.

Fame is, after all, a hollow, unsatisfying thing to a man of his nature. He heartily enjoyed his success, he delighted in hearing that his books had given pleasure or been of use to any one, but no public victory could in the least make up to him for the loss he had suffered in his private life; indeed, I almost think there were times when his triumphs as an author seemed to him utterly worthless—days of depression, when the congratulations of his friends were nothing but a mockery. He had gained a striking success, it is true, but he had lost Freda; he was in the position of the starving man who has received a gift of bon-bons, but so craves for bread that they half sicken him. I used now and then to watch his face when, as often happened, some one said: "What an enviable fellow you are, Vaughan, to get on like this!" or, "What wouldn't I give to change places with you!" He would invariably smile and turn the conversation; but there was a look in his eyes at such times that I hated to see—it always made me think of Mrs. Browning's poem, 'The Mask'—

"Behind no prison-grate, she said,
Which slurs the sunshine half a mile,
Live captives so uncomfortable
As souls behind a smile."

As to the Merrifields, there was no chance of seeing them, for Sir Richard had gone to India in some official capacity, and no doubt, as every one said, they would take good care to marry Freda out there. Derrick had not seen her since that trying February at Bath, long ago. Yet I fancy she was never out of his thoughts.

And so the years rolled on, and Derrick worked away steadily, giving his books to the world, accepting the comforts and discomforts of an author's life, laughing at the outrageous reports that were in circulation about him, yet occasionally, I think, inwardly wincing at them, and learning from the number of begging letters which he received, and into which he usually caused searching inquiry to be made, that there are in the world a vast number of undeserving poor.

One day I happened to meet Lady Probyn at a garden-party ; it was at the same house on Campden Hill where I had once met Freda, and perhaps it was the recollection of this which prompted me to enquire after her.

"She has not been well," said Lady Probyn, "and they are sending her back to England ; the climate doesn't suit her. She is to make her home with us for the present, so I am the gainer. Freda has always been my favourite niece. I don't know what it is about her that is so taking ; she is not half so pretty as the others."

"But so much more charming," I said. "I wonder she has not married out in India, as every one prophesied."

"And so do I," said her aunt. "However, poor child, no doubt, after having been two years engaged to that very disappointing hero of Saspataras Hill, she will be shy of venturing to trust any one again."

"Do you think that affair ever went very deep ?" I ventured to ask. "It seemed to me that she looked miserable during her engagement, and happy when it was broken off."

"Quite so," said Lady Probyn ; "I noticed the same thing. It was nothing but a mistake. They were not in the least suited to each other. By-the-by, I hear that Derrick Vaughan is married."

"Derrick ?" I exclaimed ; "oh, no, that is a mistake. It is merely one of the hundred and one reports that are for ever being set afloat about him."

"But I saw it in a paper, I assure you," said Lady Probyn, by no means convinced.

"Ah, that may very well be ; they were hard up for a paragraph, no doubt, and inserted it. But, as for Derrick, why, how should he marry ? He has been madly in love with Miss Merri-field ever since our cruise in the *Aurora*."

Lady Probyn made an inarticulate exclamation.

"Poor fellow !" she said, after a minute's thought ; "that explains much to me."

She did not explain her rather ambiguous remark, and before long our *tête-à-tête* was interrupted.

Now that my friend was a full-fledged barrister, he and I shared chambers ; and one morning, about a month after this garden party, Derrick came in with a face of such radiant happiness, that I couldn't imagine what good luck had befallen him.

"What do you think ?" he exclaimed ; "here's an invitation

for a cruise in the *Aurora* at the end of August—to be nearly the same party that we had years ago,” and he threw down the letter for me to read.

Of course there was a special mention of “my niece, Miss Merrifield, who has just returned from India, and is ordered plenty of sea-air.” I could have told that without reading the letter, for it was written quite clearly in Derrick’s face. He looked ten years younger, and if any of his adoring readers could have seen the pranks he was up to that morning in our staid and respectable chambers, I am afraid they would no longer have spoken of him “with bated breath and whispering humbleness.”

As it happened, I too was able to leave home for a fortnight at the end of August; and so our party in the *Aurora* really was the same, except that we were all several years older, and let us hope wiser, than on the previous occasion. Considering all that had intervened, I was surprised that Derrick was so little altered; as for Freda, she was decidedly paler than when we first met her, but before long sea-air and happiness wrought a wonderful transformation in her.

In spite of the pessimists who are for ever writing books—even writing novels (more shame to them) to prove that there is no such thing as happiness in the world, we managed every one of us heartily to enjoy our cruise. It seemed indeed true that—

“Green leaves and blossoms, and sunny warm weather,
And singing and loving all come back together.”

Something, at any rate, of the glamour of those past days came back to us all, I fancy, as we laughed and dozed and idled and talked beneath the snowy wings of the *Aurora*, and I cannot say I was in the least surprised when, on roaming through the pleasant garden walks in that unique little island of Tresco, I came once more upon Derrick and Freda, with, if you will believe it, another handful of white heather given to them by that discerning gardener. Freda once more reminded me of the girl in the ‘Biglow Papers,’ and Derrick’s face was full of such bliss as one seldom sees.

He had always had to wait for his good things, but in the end they came to him. However, you may depend upon it he didn’t say much. That was never his way. He only gripped my hand, and with his eyes all aglow with happiness exclaimed, “Congratulate me, old fellow!”

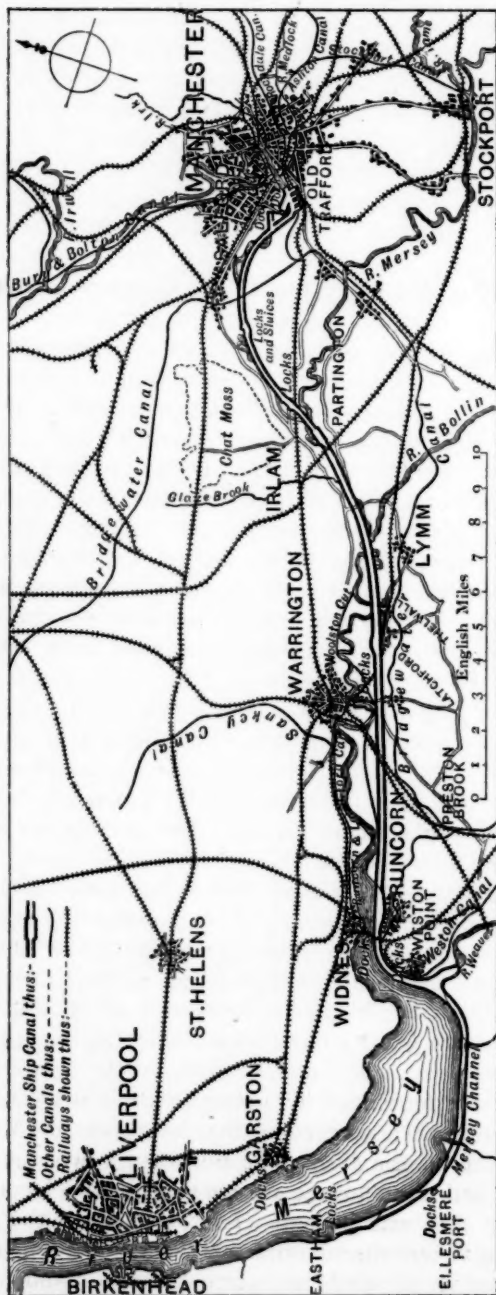
THE END.

The Manchester Ship Canal.

“IF only the luckless shareholders, whose savings of a lifetime have been wasted in a fruitless struggle with nature at Panama, could have come to Lancashire and seen what a big job it is to cut a ship canal, through flat meadows and alongside of a sluggish stream, for five-and-thirty miles, they would never have undertaken to carry their canal for twice the distance through tropical swamps, across the course of a great river, and over the top of a range of hills, however persuasively *le grand Français* might have charmed.” Such was the reflection that forced itself irresistibly into my mind, as mile after mile of the great ditch that is to bring the sea to Manchester stretched away before my astonished eyes. For indeed the ditch is a very big one, so big that it is difficult to convey in words an adequate idea. The Suez Canal seems small enough no doubt, looked at from above, and when full of water. But drain off the water and go down to the bottom, and the effect would, I take it, be quite otherwise. And the Manchester Canal is nearly twice as broad as its elder brother. Or to put the thing another way, imagine in a flat valley, such as that of the Isis or of the Cam, a trench half as wide again as Portland Place, with banks as high as the Portland Place houses, and then think that this trench has got to be carried as far as from Reading to London.

Any one unconvinced by a sight of the Canal itself that the task of making it is a serious one, would assuredly be converted if he saw the plant and machinery at work. Though the Canal is only 35 miles long, there are about 200 miles of railway line laid down on or near its banks, and 150 locomotives are at work upon them to remove the soil dug out by 15,000 human and 80 steam navvies. One of these latter has been known before now

SKETCH PLAN OF THE MANCHESTER SHIP CANAL.



W. & A. Boulton & Co.

to feed full 650 railway wagons, holding 4 cubic yards apiece, in the course of a day. But when there are 50,000,000 cubic yards to be excavated, 2600 is a mere flea-bite. In all, the plant on the ground at the present moment is valued at upwards of £700,000. But we are getting on too fast. Before describing the Canal as it is, or rather as it will be, we must first go back to the beginning of things, and see how there comes to be a Canal at all.

More than a century and a half ago, when Lancashire had only just recovered from the fright of seeing the Elder Pretender at Preston, an Act of Parliament was obtained for making the "Rivers Mersey and Irwell navigable from Liverpoole to Manchester." In 1794 a Company was incorporated under the style and title of "The Proprietors of the Mersey and Irwell Navigation," and empowered to effect further improvements of these rivers. The Mersey and Irwell Navigation is now-a-days practically a dead-letter, and its control has long since passed into the hands of the proprietors of the Bridgewater Canal. This latter famous undertaking, which dates from 1759, was, as all the world knows, constructed by Brindley and Telford for the great Duke of Bridgewater. It runs from Worsley, seven miles north of Manchester, and crossing the Irwell on an aqueduct, long regarded as the greatest engineering marvel of the age, obtains an outlet to the estuary of the Mersey at Runcorn. Manchester is some 60 feet above sea-level, so the Canal, which is without a lock for almost its whole length, descends upon Runcorn through a series of ten locks, forming a complete flight of stairs.

The Bridgewater Canal was a splendid success, not only from an engineering but also from a commercial point of view. Like most monopolists, however, its proprietors were, or at least were accused of being, over-exacting, so in the years of severe depression that followed the conclusion of the war with France, the Manchester merchants cast about for some means of reducing the excessive cost of carriage. In 1825 an application was made to Parliament for powers to construct a ship canal from Manchester, not, however, to the mouth of the Mersey, but to the mouth of the Dee. The Bill was thrown out on Standing Orders, and the following session the Liverpool and Manchester Railway Act was passed. The opening of the railway four years later introduced immediate and sweeping reductions in the rates for all kinds of merchandise and minerals. For the

next half century it was the day of the railways, and, with the exception of one abortive enquiry in 1846, nothing more was heard of canals either for ships or barges.

Manchester, however, was not without a grievance, but its scape-goat was not so much the railway rates as the Liverpool Dock Dues. The old, unreformed Corporation of Liverpool seems to have been a very curious and interesting body. The freedom of the city, even though not contained in a gold box, was a prize that no one was likely to refuse. Not only were the Corporation the fortunate possessors of the bulk of the building land in the heart of the town, not only did they reclaim the marshy land along the river at the expense of loans raised on the security of the dock dues, and then hand over the land so reclaimed to themselves, but they went further, and boasted that, while less-favoured towns had to provide for street maintenance and so forth out of their own pockets, in Liverpool the Town Dues on shipping obviated any such disagreeable necessity.

These same Town Dues were, in the year 1856, the object of a furious onslaught by no less a person than Harriet Martineau. Being, as she explains in the preface of her book, "prevented by the state of her health from undertaking any extensive literary labour," she yet managed to write a tolerably exhaustive treatise, tracing the history of the port from the days when, "on the spot where St. George's Hall and the Infirmary now stand, the peasants used to lay their peat rows in the sun and scare the waterfowl from the reedy ponds." She described how "the trade of the port increased considerably under Elizabeth, and the Corporation felt justified in going to the expense of a large beam and pair of scales, in which all imported goods were weighed," till finally she brought the story down to her own day. What that story was concerns us not here. Suffice it to say that, at the present time, though the Town Dues have long ceased to be applied to the relief of the local taxation of the citizens of Liverpool, the Dock Trust (now distinct from the Corporation) finds itself saddled with a total debt of seventeen millions sterling. To meet the interest on this sum, it raises annually from the sixteen million tons of shipping which use the port a revenue of £900,000, in addition to any amounts which are charged for actual services rendered, such as portorage, or quay attendance.

The Ship-Canal project, which had been started by the

depression of 1820, was revived by the depression of sixty years later. Trade was undeniably bad, profits had been cut down to nothing, and in many cases mills were working at a loss; but the Liverpool Dock Dues still claimed their tribute of £900,000 *per annum*, and the North-Western Railway still kept on the even tenour of its prosperous way, and only reduced its customary dividend from $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. to $6\frac{1}{4}$. Meanwhile the full meaning of the revolution that the Suez Canal had effected was coming to be understood, and the value of its shares was advancing by leaps and bounds. Manchester bethought itself once more of the possibility of water-communciation, and in April 1877 the Chamber of Commerce resolved that "there is no doubt it would be of the greatest service to the trade and interests of the district to have an improved water-way." From that time forward a continuous and heavy rain of pamphlets, letters, leading articles, speeches, and resolutions fell upon the public mind for a period of five years.

In the summer of 1882 the project took definite shape. Mr. Daniel Adamson called a meeting at his house, at which eleven Mayors and over fifty other representative men from Manchester and its immediate neighbourhood were present. The result was the formation of a provisional committee, and the submission to that committee of two rival engineering schemes. Mr. Fulton, a London engineer, had a plan for a canal, which should be without locks throughout; which, consequently, at the Manchester end would be in a cutting some 85 feet below the ground-level. Practical freighters declared that they could not unload their ships at the bottom of a hole, and that the cheapest possible way of raising the goods to the surface was to lift ship and goods together, floating in a basin of water. In opposition to Mr. Fulton, Mr. Leader Williams, a local engineer long known in connection with canal navigation, presented a scheme for a canal with locks from Runcorn to Manchester, a distance of about twenty miles. The two plans were referred for decision to Mr. Abernethy, who unhesitatingly pronounced in favour of the latter. A Bill was at once prepared and lodged.

The Examiner of private Bills reported in due course in the following session that the Standing Orders had not been complied with. Within ten days there poured in 326 petitions, most of them from municipalities, public companies and Chambers of Commerce. One petition was signed by 186,000 people. Their

unanimous prayer was that Standing Orders might be suspended. And suspended they were forthwith and the Bill proceeded. After thirty-nine days' hearing before the Select Committee of the House of Commons the preamble of the Bill was declared to be proved; the Committee themselves amending it—said to be the only instance of the kind on record—by the addition of the following words: "Whereas it appeared from the evidence adduced that, if the scheme could be carried out with due regard to existing interests, the Manchester Ship Canal would afford valuable facilities to the trade of Lancashire, and ought to be sanctioned." In the Lords, however, the Bill was thrown out partly owing to the late period of the session at which it had come before them, but mainly on the ground that the scheme was avowedly incomplete. No plans had been deposited to show how the ships were to get from Runcorn to the sea. The promoters promised, indeed, to introduce a Bill dealing with this question in the following session, but it was argued fairly enough that if that Bill failed to pass, Parliamentary sanction would in fact have been given to a perfectly useless expenditure of several millions sterling. So the whole matter was postponed till the following session.

Next year accordingly the case was taken up *de novo*, and this time the Bill began in the Lords. After an enquiry extending over forty-one days—a calculation by a prominent member of the provisional Committee that the cost of proceedings was five guineas a minute was responsible for the fact that it was sufficiently curtailed to come even within these limits—the preamble of the Bill was declared proved on May 24th, 1884. In honour of the event a grand demonstration, at which 60,000 people were present, took place in the Pomona Gardens, the Rosherville of Manchester. The ingratitude of public companies is proverbial, and the Ship Canal Company has since then taken possession of the Pomona Gardens as the site for its terminal docks and warehouses.

But the Bill was not yet safe. The interests involved were so great that the unusual course was taken of opposing it also in the other House of Parliament, and on this occasion in the House of Commons the opposition was successful. The scheme as now completed provided for the passage of ships between Runcorn and Liverpool along a deep-water channel confined between training walls. Evidence was given that this interference with the natural course of the river might injuriously

affect the port of Liverpool. At the same time Liverpool pledged itself to withdraw all opposition, if, instead of a channel down the middle of the estuary, a canal was substituted along the south shore.

Next year accordingly the Bill was once more amended. In its final shape it provided for the construction of the Canal as it is now being made, thirty-five miles in length from Manchester to Eastham. Having begun in a tea-garden it was to end in a tea-garden, for Eastham Ferry is to the inhabitants of Liverpool a place of resort almost as popular as and were the old Pomona Gardens with the citizens of Manchester. Once more the case was presented to the two Houses of Parliament. The Lords investigated for thirty days and then agreed to pass the Bill. Then a very strong Committee of the House of Commons,—readers of Mr. Wemyss-Reid's Life will not have forgotten that its Chairman was W. E. Forster,—deliberated for thirty-five days more, and finally unanimously decided to report in favour of the Bill. Three days later, on August 6th, 1885, it received the Royal Assent. In all the enquiry had lasted one hundred and seventy five days and had cost the promoters a sum of £150,000. Since the great days when "King" Hudson fought with "twelve-counsel power" on behalf of the Midland Railway against that insolent upstart, the proposed Great Northern, Parliamentary Committee-rooms had not seen such a struggle. The Act as passed is a folio volume of some two hundred pages, of which about eighty are occupied with saving clauses, protecting the rights of Corporations, adjacent owners, Railway Companies, and others, with whose vested interests the Canal might possibly interfere.

But the Canal Company was not yet at the end of its experience of Parliamentary proceedings and Parliamentary expenses. The autumn of 1885 was perhaps one of the two or three worst periods for the raising of a large capital for a vast and novel undertaking, that this generation has known. It was found necessary to apply to Parliament in the following session for power to pay interest during construction. In the last two or three years the stern and unbending adherence to this principle of abstract political economy has been a good deal relaxed. But in 1886 the precedents were all in one direction, and it says not a little for the public enthusiasm which had been roused on behalf of the undertaking, that the House of Commons agreed without a division to the second reading of

the Manchester Ship Canal Interest Bill. The next step was the issue of the Prospectus of the Company. And over this step Manchester, at the present moment, would desire to pass as lightly and as rapidly as possible. The great house of Rothschild had undertaken to act as agents to receive subscriptions. In Lancashire it was thought (as indeed is usually the case) that the name of Rothschild was sufficient, that the financial kings of New Court had but to hold up their hands and the money would pour in from investors all over the country. Messrs. Rothschild on their part equally naturally took it for granted—as well they might after the hundreds of meetings that had been held, and of petitions that had been presented—that Lancashire was devoted heart and soul to the Canal, and that a pet Lancashire scheme would never be allowed to languish for want of a mere trifle of eight millions sterling. The subscription lists were opened on Tuesday, July 20, 1886. According to the wording of the prospectus, they were to be closed on or before the following Friday. What amount of capital was actually offered for subscription was never known, but it fell so far short of what had been expected, that in the course of Tuesday the announcement was made that the prospectus had been withdrawn, and the money subscribed would be returned forthwith.

The truth was that the great Lancashire capitalists were mostly inclined to think the whole scheme a chimera. Strong popular feeling in its favour there unquestionably was. Chambers of Commerce by the dozen had petitioned in support—possibly with the idea that at all events they would scare the railways into reducing their rates. The commercial case for the promoters had been proved up to the hilt before the Committees of both Houses of Parliament. But the great Lancashire capitalists had, for the most part, held aloof hitherto. At this point the provisional committee, or rather, as it had now become, the Board of Directors of the Canal Company, took a bold decision. They determined to submit their scheme to a consultative committee, consisting of some twenty leading men of Manchester and district, who should “take into consideration the whole scheme of the Ship Canal Company, including the obtaining of the capital, the strengthening of the position of the Company in public estimation, and any other matters affecting the future of the scheme, and report to the Board.”

The conclusion to which that committee came must be given in its own words. They begin by saying that they have held "a most careful enquiry extending over about five weeks, and carried on almost from day to day, in sittings usually of many hours." Further they say: "We believe we are correct in stating that not one of the members forming the Committee entered upon the enquiry with his mind made up, and we are sure that many of them did so with opinions adverse, rather than favourable, to the commercial prospects of the scheme. We have examined it with all care, and with the constant endeavour to discover its weak points, and with this object we have made it our business to ascertain and enquire into the objections brought against the scheme. If, in the result, we have been led with unanimity to conclusions far more favourable to the project than we could have anticipated, it is, we believe, only because a similarly exhaustive enquiry would produce the same effect upon the minds of others who might undertake it."

The report dealt *seriatim* with all the different considerations involved. Its conclusions may be summarized as follows:—"That there was no engineering difficulty in navigating ships of the largest class to and from Manchester; that the estimate of the money required for lands and works, and of the future cost of working and maintenance was ample; and, finally, that the project was a thoroughly sound commercial undertaking, and would speedily become remunerative on the completion of the works. That a large amount of traffic would be at once secured, and that thereafter the increase in traffic and revenue must be steady and continuous."

One other recommendation of the Committee must just be noticed. They felt it their duty to state that, in their judgment it was necessary "before the issue of any further prospectus, to reconstitute and greatly to strengthen the Board of Directors." The recommendation was acted upon. Lord Egerton of Tatton became Chairman. Sir Joseph Lee, (who has since obtained wider fame for his successful conduct of the Manchester Exhibition of 1887,) Vice-Chairman; and several other members of the consultative committee joined the board. One more application was made to Parliament, and power was taken to divide the £8,000,000 of share capital into £4,000,000 of ordinary and £4,000,000 of preferred. And then the final effort was made. This time all classes united to carry through an undertaking in

which the credit of Lancashire was felt to be involved. The Corporation of Salford applied for Parliamentary powers to subscribe £250,000. The private capitalists did their share; while to show the sympathy of the working-classes with the scheme, there was scarcely a Co-operative Society in the district, from the great Wholesale Society, which has its head-quarters in Manchester, downwards, but invested a considerable proportion of its reserve fund in Canal shares. There was no further talk of failure, the thing had got to be done, and Manchester meant to do it.

The Parliamentary condition that the work should not be undertaken till £5,000,000 of capital had been subscribed—in addition to the £1,710,000 required for the purchase of the Bridgewater Canal system—was without difficulty complied with, and in November 1887 the first sod was cut by the Chairman at Eastham. The contract for the construction of the Canal has been let to Mr. Walker, the builder of the Severn Tunnel, for £5,750,000, being £575,000 less than the Parliamentary estimate. He is under contract to have the Canal finished and ready for traffic by January 1st, 1892, and to judge by present appearances it is more than likely that that date will be anticipated.

The Canal, as has been said, commences at the Pomona Gardens, in the outskirts of Manchester. It follows the course of the Irwell for about eight miles to the point where at Irlam it falls into the Mersey—if justice were done in this world, the Mersey would not be as famous as it is, for the Irwell is the much more important stream of the two, and ought in fairness to have given its name to the whole river. In these eight miles the Canal crosses the river eight times, in fact the river is so often diverted, that with half-dug new channels here, and temporary channels there, it is almost impossible, at the present moment, to make out where the original bed of the river was. The docks at Manchester will occupy about 200 acres of land. There will be lock gates at the entrance, a second series of locks at Barton, some four miles down, and a third set at Irlam. At Latchford, a mile or two outside Warrington, comes a fourth set; and then—except for the entrance locks at Eastham, which will only be closed at half tide—there will be a clear run right out to sea, or at least right out to the bar at the mouth of the Mersey. I have spoken of a set or a series of locks, and for this reason. Sir

Isaac Newton, in the old story, cut through his study door a big hole for his cat and a little hole for her kittens. The engineer of the Ship Canal has followed the precedent of the great philosopher, and with better justification. For in a very dry summer it is possible that water may be scarce in the upper reaches, and it takes a good deal of water to fill a lock 550 feet long and 60 feet wide. Alongside, therefore, of a lock this size, which is practically large enough to take any ship afloat, there is a second lock 300 feet by 40 feet for ordinary ships. Each lock, moreover, has gates in the middle, so that only half its length need be brought into use, if that is sufficient. The lock gates will be worked by powerful hydraulic machinery, enabling vessels to pass through in ten to fifteen minutes. The engineering calculation is that a ship will be able to get from Eastham to Manchester within eight hours. Allowing for the fact that large vessels can only enter the Liverpool Docks at the top of the tide, while they will be able to enter the Canal at any hour, this would imply that a ship which came on to Manchester would be docked practically as soon as one which stopped at Liverpool.

For some miles below Manchester the Canal is to be constructed about double the ordinary width, so that there may be room for vessels to be moored on either side without obstructing the flow of traffic up and down. It is expected that chemical works and manufactories of all kinds will be glad to avail themselves of the opportunity of water-carriage right up to their very doors. Three miles down, at Barton just above the locks, the Bridgewater Canal crosses what was the Irwell and will in future be the Ship Canal, on Brindley's famous aqueduct, of which mention has already been made. But the days of the aqueduct are numbered. A clear headway of 75 feet has to be left for the passage of vessels up to Manchester, so the fixed stone aqueduct is to be replaced by an iron swing-bridge or aqueduct, which can be turned aside as often as it is necessary for vessels to pass. The bridge, which will be, practically speaking, a trough filled with water, will have gates at either end, and there will be corresponding gates on the two sides where the Canal joins it. In this way not a drop of water will be lost when the bridge is swung open. Alongside there will be hydraulic lifts in which barges can be transferred floating in water from one canal to the other. Mr. Leader Williams has already had some experience in this matter, as on the Weaver Navigation he has constructed

lifts of this kind, in which boats are raised or lowered 52 feet in a space of three minutes.

At Irlam we come upon the first of the five railways which cross the Canal, the Cheshire Lines road from Manchester to Liverpool. The interference with the railway communications of the district was one of the chief engineering difficulties of the scheme, and the method in which these difficulties are being faced forms one of the most interesting features of the works now in progress. It was mentioned some pages back that the navigation of the Irwell and the Mersey is a very old idea, and when the Grand Junction Railway obtained an Act of Parliament, now more than half a century ago, for a line to connect the London and Birmingham with the Liverpool and Manchester, a clause was inserted providing that, if, at any future time, it was desired to improve the river navigation, the railway company should replace their permanent viaduct by a swing-bridge. The precedent of the Grand Junction has been followed since then in every other Act authorizing a railway to cross the river. With one exception, however. At Runcorn, where the river is nearly half a mile wide, a swing-bridge was impossible, so the North-Western Railway was required to construct a high-level bridge. It is this bridge, which has a clear headway of 75 feet at high water, which has now been taken as governing the height of all the bridges on the Canal higher up.

It was all very well for Parliament to enact that the railways should provide swing-bridges, but expresses running at sixty miles an hour, and mineral trains with loads of 500 tons, were not as common in the old Grand Junction days as they are at present. Two of the five railways that cross the Canal,—the Cheshire Lines at Irlam, and the main line of the North-Western outside Warrington,—are among the most important highways in the country; and all the other three are crowded with traffic. To work them, with swing-bridges perpetually being opened, would have been an utter impossibility. As the Canal evidently could not be put down any lower, there was nothing for it but to put the railways up higher. Certainly, however, the Companies cannot complain that Parliament has been careless of the interests of their traffic.

The Act provides in each case that, alongside of the existing line, a new railway shall be constructed from a point sufficiently far back from the Canal on either side to secure that the gradient rising to the bridge over the Canal is never steeper than

1 in 135. The whole of this work, which means the construction of some twelve miles of new railway—and to build a railway, as it is in one case, wide enough for four roads, on a bank rising gradually from the level to a height of 70 feet, is no slight matter—has to be done at the expense of the Canal Company, and the obligation on the railways to construct swing-bridges if required is repealed. When the new deviation railways are complete, they are to be handed over to the Companies to whose system they will belong, and to be worked experimentally for six months for goods traffic. If they successfully pass through this ordeal, then, and then only, may the contractor for the Canal cut the existing lines. But even after this the Canal Company remains liable for a further period of three months to make good any defects occurring in the new road. The cost of these deviation railways is estimated in all at about half a million sterling.

At Partington just below the confluence of the Irwell and the Mersey, close to the point where the Stockport and Warrington line crosses, the Canal widens out into a broad basin. Here coal-tips are to be erected, and here it is hoped that in the future the Cheshire Lines may supply fleets of steam-colliers with the produce of the Barnsley and South Yorkshire and South Lancashire collieries. By its export trade in steam-coal, Cardiff has been raised in a generation from a village to a county. The Barnsley steam-coal is said to be not inferior to that of Cardiff, but it has hitherto been handicapped out of the race by its distance from the seaboard. It may be added that, not only here but at Manchester also, the Cheshire Lines are more fortunate in their access to the Canal than their older rival, the North-Western. Unquestionably, if the traffic of the Canal comes up to the hope of its promoters, the North-Western will find themselves compelled ere long to provide a Partington of their own.

The upper portion of the Canal may be considered to terminate at Runcorn, 23 miles from Manchester. With the exception of the Docks at Warrington, constructed in what was formerly one reach of the much-diverted Mersey, it has below Partington no feature calling for special notice from non-technical persons. The Mersey flows in wider loops, often at a considerable distance away, and the Canal is nothing but a huge gash scored across the face of the level country. At Runcorn the scene changes abruptly. The river has become an estuary, and henceforward

to the mouth it is water rather than land with which engineers and contractor have to reckon. Not that the reckoning is by any means one-sided, for if, on the one hand, the engineers have got to carry their Canal across the shifting mud at the mouth of the Weaver, a mile or two further to construct elaborate sluices to let out the waters of a not inconsiderable stream known by the cacophonious name of the Holpool Gutter, and again to carry the river Gowy underneath the bed of the Canal by two syphons, each twelve feet in diameter, on the other hand it is to water the manager looks for a good portion of his traffic in the future. For at Runcorn the Bridgewater Canal will fall in, and not only does this undertaking, now incorporated with the Ship Canal Company, even at the present time carry a very large share of the traffic to and from the Manchester district, but it also is the high road for the immense china-clay traffic on its way inward to the Staffordshire Potteries. Only a couple of miles lower down, round the corner of Weston Point, the salt traffic of the canalized Weaver figures itself up to a million tons per annum. Three miles from Eastham, at Ellesmere Port, the Shropshire Union System of canals should, it is considered, act as one more feeder.

All this, however, is still in the future. At present it is not the traffic manager, but the engineer who is the ruling monarch. I have seen not a few great engineering works in course of construction, including, on more than one occasion, a much more imposing-looking work, the wonderful Forth Bridge. But such a vast hive of industry, such a busy hum, not merely of men, but of machinery, as is, at the present moment, the Ship Canal along its entire length, I have not yet seen. Oriental monarchs have built pyramids, and turned aside the course of mighty rivers. The dogged determination of Roman engineers accomplished some tasks of which even modern science might be proud; but it is probably safe to say that, never since the world began, has so much been done in so short a time to change the face of Nature over five-and-thirty miles of country, as has been accomplished by Mr. Walker in the last eighteen months. From Clapham Junction—as the network of temporary railways outside Manchester has appropriately been christened—down to the site of the furthest lock at Eastham, everywhere the work is going on at full speed. Except, indeed, at one or two points, and there it has ceased because the Canal is already finished. With the exception of a short gap at Runcorn, a through line,

known to the staff as the Overland Route, runs from end to end of the entire Canal. Branch lines, here to the bottom of the excavations in progress, there to the top of a huge heap where the "spoil," or excavated material, is being "tipped," or again to some neighbouring railway, or canal, or quarry, or brickfield, whence supplies are drawn, run off on every hand. At one point in a cutting human navvies are at work by the hundred. Hard by their place is more than filled by two or three of their huge steam rivals.

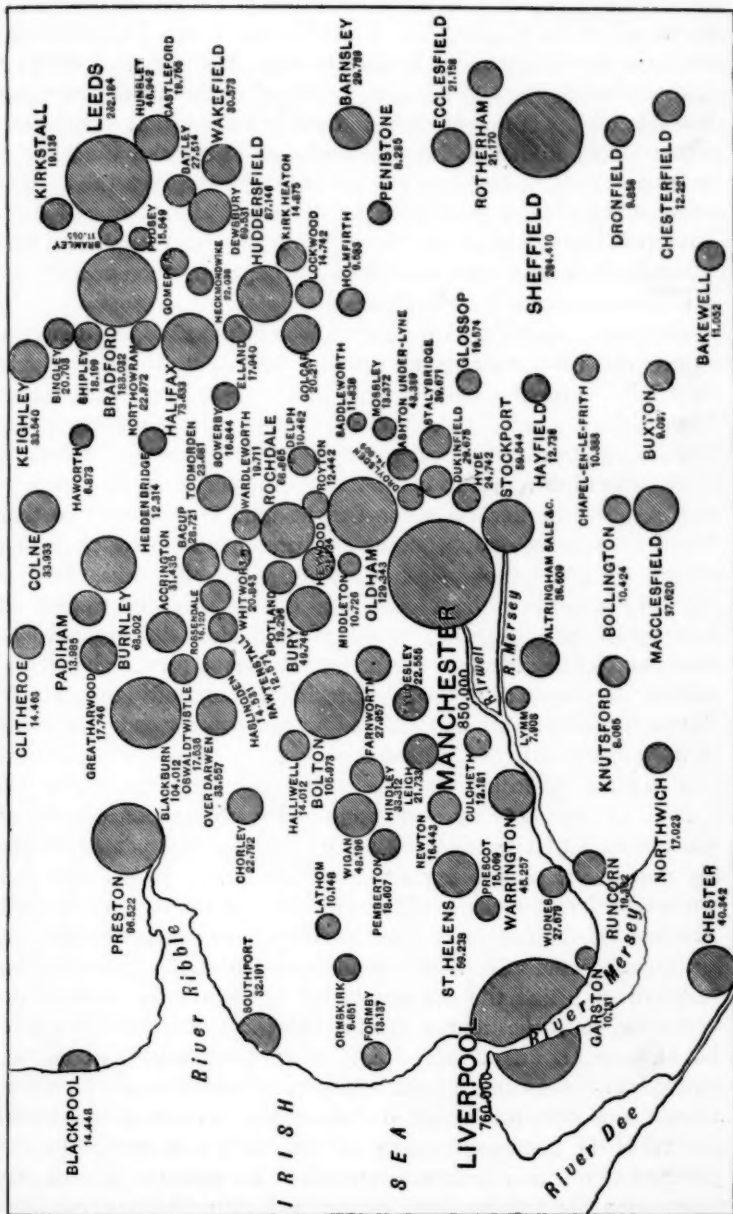
There are four different kinds of steam navvies employed. The German and French machines work in a fashion much like that of a common dredger, and dragging an endless chain of buckets over the surface of the ground, empty their contents into a row of trucks behind. But the main part of the work is done by the ordinary English navvy, which works a single huge bucket, armed in front with great teeth, up and down at the end of a crane against the face of the cutting. Every minute the teeth make a fresh bite, and at each bite they take away a ton weight with them. Then there is yet another machine, known as a "grab," which has, as it were, two hands tied together at the wrist, and buries its fingers in the soil, then clasps them together and lifts up its handful—a mere cart-load or so. Every few miles along the line there are stations with repairing shops for the engines and machinery, with huge store-rooms filled with barrels of oil, spades and pickaxes by the gross, nails and spikes, bolts and rivets, by the hundredweight, of all sorts and sizes. Nor are the men neglected. At each station there is a hospital—for these, so far, there has fortunately been little use—a chapel, and a comfortable coffee-room. Offices for the district engineer and his clerks and draughtsmen, for the contractor's agent, sub-agents and foremen, with (if there is no town near) groups of neat huts for the navvies and their families, combine to make up what are really, in several instances, large and populous villages. I have no wish to inflict statistics upon my readers, so I will merely add that, what with pumping-engines, steam-navvies, steam-cranes, and locomotives, the coal consumption amounts to about 11,000 tons a month, or say two train-loads every working day—and forbear at once from further figures.

What is to be the result of it all? is the natural question that every visitor must ask himself. Will Liverpool be abandoned

to ruin and the peasants once more stack their peat in rows in front of St. George's Hall? Will the Canal displace the railways as utterly as we fancied twenty years ago the railways had displaced the canals? Or, on the other hand, will the Canal itself be a colossal failure, one more proof, added to the costly experiments at Greenock and Tilbury, to show how difficult it is to divert the course of established trade. One cannot tell. The event will probably show that the world is wide enough both for Liverpool and Manchester, both for canal and railways. But, meanwhile, this at least is certain, that the commercial case for the promoters was submitted to the most rigorous cross-examination that the skill and local knowledge of some of the keenest intellects in England could suggest, and that it emerged from the ordeal triumphant. Those who do not know Lancashire, or who only know it by passing through in an express train along two or three main routes, have no conception of the extent and importance of its traffic. It would be safe to say that not one Londoner in a hundred has ever so much as heard of several of the towns of 20,000 and upwards whose names are given on the opposite page. The North-Western is a great company, and stretches from Carmarthen and Cardiff to Cambridge and Carlisle. It has its eggs in many baskets, but its General Manager stated in evidence that half its revenue was earned in Lancashire and Yorkshire. Yorkshire the North-Western hardly touches, and it is only one of six great companies that serve the port of Liverpool.

It can hardly be but that the Canal will get some traffic. If it gets nothing more than what would be the normal increase of the traffic of Liverpool, it will not do badly. For it must always be remembered that a canal and a railway stand upon an entirely different footing. It costs a railway 6*d.* to earn 1*s.*, but of every 1*s.* obtained by a canal at least 10½*d.* is pure profit. If the North-Western Railway receives £3,000,000 a year for the carriage of goods in Lancashire and Yorkshire (as it must do according to Mr. Findlay's statement), the Canal should surely be able to earn £500,000. And £500,000, roughly speaking, would pay 5 per cent. on the whole of the capital of the Company. For it should be noted that, of the nominal £10,000,000 capital of the Company, nearly £2,000,000 has gone to buy the Bridgewater Canal undertaking, which at present pays 4 per cent. upon the purchase-money, and is hardly likely to pay less when, instead of carrying the goods by barge down the river

MAP SHOWING POPULATION OF THE SHIP CANAL DISTRICT.



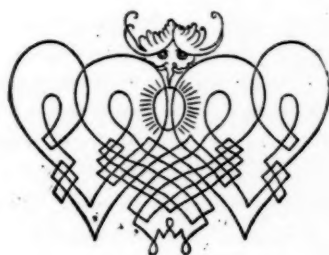
from Runcorn to Liverpool, they can be delivered alongside the vessel in the Ship Canal itself. To show how small a sum, relatively speaking, was necessary to make the Canal a financial success, Mr. Pember, the leading counsel in its favour, put the case this way. If nothing else but the cotton, which at present comes into and leaves Manchester, were to use the Canal, and be charged the maximum rates allowed by the Act, the cotton trade would save in carriage £456,000 a year as compared with what they pay at present, and, in addition, there would be left a sufficient balance of profit to pay 5 per cent. upon two-thirds of the whole capital of the country.

That the Canal, to the extent to which it is used will tend to reduce the total charges at present paid, is a point on which there can be no two opinions. For, by the Act, the maximum Canal charge is fixed at, roughly speaking, half the existing rail and dock charge combined. It has been indeed asserted that ships will either refuse to come to Manchester at all, or at least will demand higher rates for freight and insurance. To this Manchester men reply, that, at the present moment, no extra charge is made, not only in the case of great highways, such as the Suez Canal, or the North Sea Canal to Amsterdam, but actually where vessels are sent up much more difficult navigations, as for instance to Ghent. The usual form of foreign charter, they say, is "to any port in the United Kingdom;" therefore, when a skipper calls at Queenstown for orders, he will be only too glad to go to Manchester, when he might have been told to go to Aberdeen or to Leith.

It is ill prophesying unless one knows, and no one, however conversant with the trade of the district, can as yet tell what the year 1892 may bring forth. The railway companies and the town of Liverpool fought their hardest against the Canal. The latter, indeed, went so far as to start in opposition to it a fantastic scheme with a capital of seven millions sterling for a "plate-way" (like the Northumbrian colliery lines of the last century) from the manufacturing districts to the Liverpool docks. But, if an outsider might hazard a guess, it would be, that Liverpool is much more likely than the railways to suffer, if the Canal does really turn out a success. Whatever promotes the trade of Lancashire must, in the long run, promote the prosperity of its railways. And the North-Western and its fellows may find themselves a few years hence delivering along thirty miles of continuous wharves all and more than all the

goods that at present they concentrate upon a single port. But the prosperity of Lancashire and its railways would bring no comfort to the citizens of Liverpool, whose very existence is bound up with the maintenance of their present position as the port of Manchester and its neighbours, and whose docks are burdened with the huge dead-weight of a debt of seventeen millions sterling.

W. M. ACWORTH.



Mount Athos in 1889.

Velificatus Athos is an expression which has a meaning even now, though a very different one from that implied by Juvenal. The satirist would not believe that Xerxes turned it into an island, though the remains of the canal are plainly visible to the present day. But now the incompetence of the Turkish Government has turned Athos, for English travellers, into an island, for it may only be approached by sea. If you attempt to ride there from Salonica or Cavalla, you are at once warned that you do so at your own risk ; that the tariff now fixed by a joint commission of Turks, dragomans, and bandits for the release of an English captive is £15,000 ; that you will have to pay that sum yourself, &c. &c. This is enough to drive any respectable and responsible person from the enterprise of the land journey, and so he must wait for the rare and irregular chances of boat or steamer traffic. It was my good fortune to find one of H.M.'s ships going that way from Salonica, and with a captain gracious enough to drop me on the headland, or rather to throw me up on it, for we landed in a heavy sea, with considerable risk and danger, and the *τρικυμία*, as they classically call it, lasted all day, and raged around the Holy Mountain. Yet this adventurous way of landing under the great western cliffs of the promontory, with the monasteries of S. Paul, Gregory, and Dionysius, each on their several peaks, looking down upon us from a dizzy height through the stormy mists, was doubtless far the most picturesque introduction we could have had to the long-promised land.

For this had been many years my desire, not only to see the strangest and most perfect relic now extant of mediæval superstition, but to find, if possible, in the early MSS. which throng the libraries of that famous retreat some cousin, if not some uncle or aunt of the great illuminated MSS. which are the glory of the early Irish Church. The other travellers who have reached this place have done so by arriving at some legitimate port on the tamer eastern side ; the latest,

Mr. Riley,* by landing at the gentlest and most humane spot of all, the bay of Vatopédi. We, on the contrary, crept into a little boat-harbour under the strictest, the most primitive, and far the most beautiful of the western eagles' nests, whither English pickles, tinned lobster, and caviare have not yet penetrated. We were doing a very informal and unceremonious thing, for we were invading the outlying settlements, to demand shelter and hospitality, whereas we should have first of all proceeded to the capital, Karyes, to present pompous letters of introduction from Papas, Prime Ministers, Patriarchs, and to receive equally elaborate missives from the central committee, asking the several monasteries to entertain us.

But we took the place by storm, not by regular siege. We showed our letters, when we climbed up to Dionysiu, as they call it, and prayed them to forestall the hospitality which they would doubtless show us, if we returned with official sanction. The good monks were equal to the occasion; they waived ceremony, though ceremony lords it in these conservative establishments, and every violation of it is called a *προσβολή*, probably the greatest sin that a monk can commit. At every step of our route this obstacle stood before us, and had we attempted to force our way past it, no doubt our dumb mules would have spoken, and reproved our madness. Yet when they had before them all the missives which were to be read at Karyes next day, to be followed up by a letter addressed to themselves, they actually antedated their hospitality, and made us feel at home and happy.

Nowhere have I seen more perfect and graceful hospitality in spirit, nowhere a more genuine attempt to feed the hungry, and shelter the outcast, even though the means and materials of doing so were often very inadequate to Western notions. But let me first notice the extant comforts. We always had ample room in special strangers' apartments, which occupy the highest and most picturesque place in every monastery. We always had clean beds to sleep in, nor were we disturbed by any unbidden bed-fellows, these creatures having (as we were told) made it a rule of etiquette never to appear or molest any one till after Pascha, the Feast of the Resurrection. The feast was peculiarly late this year, and the weather perfect summer, still the insects carefully avoided any such *προσβολή* towards us as to violate their Lenten fast. In addition to undisturbed nights—a

* 'Athos, or the Mountain of the Monks.' By Athelstan Riley. Longmans, 1887. This is the newest and best book on the subject.

great boon to weary travellers—we had always good black bread, and fresh every day; we had also excellent Turkish coffee, and fortunately most wholesome, for the ceremony of the place requires you to drink it whenever you enter, and whenever you leave, any domicile whatever. Seven or eight times a day did we partake of this luxury, and without damage to digestion or nerves. There was also sound red wine, and plenty of it, varying according to the makers, but mostly good, and only in one case slightly resinated. There were also excellent hazelnuts, often served hot, roast in a pan, and very palatable.

What else was there good? There was jam of many kinds, all good, though unfortunately served neat, and to be eaten in spoonfuls, without any bread, till at last we committed the *prosvolé* of asking to have it brought back when there was bread on the table. There were also eggs in abundance, just imported to be ready for Easter, and therefore fresh, and served *au plat*. Nor had we anywhere to make the complaint so pathetic in Mr. Riley's book, that the oil or butter used in cooking was rancid. This is the advantage of going in spring, or rather one of the many advantages, that both oil and butter (the latter is of course rare) were quite unobjectionable.

When I say that butter was rare and eggs imported, I assume that the reader knows of the great feature of Athos, which consists in the absence of the greatest feature of human life—woman, and all inferior imitations of her in the animal world. Not a cow, not a goat, not a hen, not a cat of that sex! And this for centuries! Three thousand monks, kept up by importation, three thousand labourers or servants, imported likewise, but no home production of animals—that is considered odious and impious. And when, in this remote nook of extreme conservatism, this one refuge from the snares and wiles of Eve, a Russian monk seriously proposed to us the propriety of admitting the other sex, we felt a shock as of an earthquake, and began to understand the current feeling that the Russians were pushing their influence at Athos, in order to transform the Holy Mountain into a den of political thieves.

Nothing is more curious than to study the effects, upon a large society, of the total exclusion of the female sex. It is commonly thought that men by themselves must grow rude and savage, that it is to women we owe all the graces and refinements of social intercourse. Nothing can be further from the truth. I venture to say that in all the world there is not so perfectly

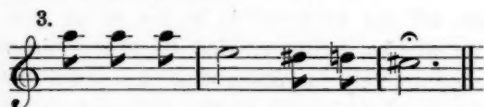
polite and orderly a society as that of Athos. As regards hospitality and gracious manners, the monks and their servants put to shame the most polished Western people. Disorder, tumult, confusion seem impossible in this land of peace. If they have differences, and squabble about rights of property, these things are referred to law courts, and determined by argument of advocates, not by disputing and high words among the claimants. While life and property is still unsafe on the mainland, and on the sister peninsulas of Cassandra and Longos, Athos has been for centuries as secure as any county in England. So far, then, all the evidence is in favour of the restriction. Many of the monks, being carried to the peninsula in early youth, have completely forgotten what a woman is like, except for the brown smoky pictures of the *Panagia* with her infant in all the churches, which the strict iconography of the orthodox Church has made as unlovely and non-human as it is possible for a picture to be. So far, so well.

But if the monks imagined they could simply expunge the other sex from their life without any but the obvious consequences, they were mistaken. What strikes the traveller is not the rudeness, the untidyness, the discomfort of a purely male society, it is rather its dulness and depression. Some of the older monks were indeed jolly enough; they drank their wine, and cracked their jokes freely. But the novices who attended at table, the men and boys who had come from the mainland to work as servants, muleteers, labourers, seemed all suffering under a permanent depression and sadness. The town of Karyes is the most sombre and gloomy place I ever saw. There are no laughing groups, no singing, no games among the boys. Every one looked serious, solemn, listless, vacant, as the case might be, but devoid of keenness and interest in life. At first one might suspect that the monks were hard task-masters, ruling their servants as slaves; but this is not the real solution. It is that the main source of interest and cause of quarrel in all these animals, human and other, does not occur. For the dulness was not confined to the young monks or the laity; it had invaded even the lower animals. The tom-cats, which were there in crowds, passed one another in moody silence along the roofs. They seemed permanently dumb. And if the cocks had not lost their voice, and crowed frequently in the small hours of the morning, their note seemed to me a wail, not a challenge—the clear though unconscious expression of a just want in their lives.

I noted down three of these cries, which in their frequent repetition sounded very dolorous, and reproduce them here carefully for the musical reader. The first two I heard at S. Gregoriou, and they were antiphonal, two birds crowing in turn thus :—



The third I heard next day at Xeropotámo, and it was still sadder and more doleful,* viz. :—



How different were the notes of the nightingales, the pigeons, the jays, whose wings emancipate them from monkish restrictions, and whose music fills with life all the enchanting glens, brakes, and forests in this earthly Paradise! For if an exquisite situation in the midst of historic splendour, a marvellous variety of outline and climate, and a vegetation rich and undisturbed beyond comparison, can make a modern Eden possible, it is here. It is as if Nature had been gradually improving in her work when she framed the three peninsulas of the Chalcidice. The westernmost, the old Pallene, once the site of the historic Olynthus, is broad and flat, with no recommendation but its fertility; the second, Sithonia, makes some attempt at being picturesque, having an outline of gently serrated hills, which rise, perhaps, to 1000 feet, and are dotted with woods. Anywhere else, Sithonia might take some rank, but within sight of the mighty Olympus, and beside the giant Athos, it remains obscure and without a history. Athos runs out into the Ægean, with its outermost cone standing 6500 feet out of the sea, and as such is far the most striking height to be seen in Europe. You may see higher Alps, but from a height, and with intervening heights to lessen the effect; you may see higher Carpathians, but from the dull plain of land in Hungary. Here you can enjoy the full splendour of the peak from the sea, from the fringe of white breakers round the base, up to the pale-grey, snow-streaked dome which reaches beyond forest and torrent into heaven.

* It is an old habit of mine to note down musically, so far as possible, the sounds in nature, and none is easier to note than the crowing of a cock. Some day I hope to give the world some curious results from these observations.

Within two or three hours you can ascend from gardens of oranges and lemons, figs and olives, through woods of arbutus, myrtle, cytissus, heath, and carpets of forget-me-not, anemone, iris, orchid, to the climate of primroses and violets, and to the stunted birch and gnarled fir which skirt the regions of perpetual snow. Moreover, the gradually-increasing ridge which forms the backbone of the peninsula is seamed on both sides with constant glens and ravines, in each of which tumbling water lends animation to the view, and life to the vegetation which often hides in its rich luxuriance the course of the stream, but cannot hush its sounding voice. Here the nightingale sings all the day long, and the fair shrubs grow, unmolested by those herds of wandering goats, which are the real locusts of the wild lands of southern Europe. Each side of the main ridge has its peculiarities of vegetation, that facing north-east being gentler in aspect, and showing brakes of Mediterranean heath ten or fifteen feet high, through which mule-paths are cut as through a forest. The coast facing south-west is far sterner, wilder, and more precipitous, but enjoys a temperature almost tropical; for the plants and fruits of southern Greece flourish without stint.

The site of the western monasteries is generally on a precipitous rock at the mouth of one of the ravines, and commands a view up the glen to the great summit of the mountain. To pass from any one of these monasteries to the next, you must either clamber down a precipice to the sea, and pass round in a boat commanded by a skipper-monk, or you must mount the mules provided, and ride round the folds and seams of the precipices, on paths incredibly dangerous of aspect, and incredibly free from any real disasters. When you come to a torrent, you must descend by zig-zag windings till you reach some practicable spot near the sea-level, and cross it at the foot of some sounding fall. But the next projecting shoulder stands straight out of the sea, and you must climb again a similar break-neck ascent, till you reach a path along the edge of the dizzy cliff, where you pass with one foot in the air, over the sea 1000 feet beneath, while the other is nudged now and then by the wall of the rock within, so that the cautious mule chooses the outer ledge of the road, though a loss of balance means strictly a loss of life. It was a constant regret to us that none of the party could sketch the beautiful scenes which were perpetually before us, or even photograph them. But the efforts of photographers hitherto have been very disappointing. There are indeed pictures of

most of the monasteries, taken at the instigation of the Russians, but all so wretchedly inadequate, so carefully taken from the wrong point, that we deliberately avoided accepting them, or carrying them home. Mr. Riley too, a man of taste and feeling, had essayed the thing with leisure and experience in his art, and yet the cuts taken from his photographs, which are published in his book, are also hopelessly inadequate. When, for example, approaching from the north, you suddenly come in view of Simópetra, across a yawning chasm with the sea roaring 1000 feet beneath, standing close to you in the air on its huge, lonely crag, holding on to the land by a mere viaduct, and behind it the great rocks and gorges and forests framed by the snowy dome of Athos in the far background, you feel that the world can produce no finer scene, and that the most riotous artistic imagination, such as Gustave Doré's, would be tamed in its presence by the inability of human pencil to reproduce it. The plan of this monastery and its smaller brothers (I was going to call them sisters!) is that of a strong square keep, rising straight from the sheer cliffs with but a single bridge of rock leading landwards, and when the wall has been carried to a height far more than sufficient against any attack save modern artillery, they begin to throw round it stories of balconies, stayed out from the wall by very light wooden beams, each sheltered by that above, till a deep-pitched roof crowns the whole. The topmost corner of these balconies is always the guest chamber or chambers, and from this lofty nook you not only look out upon the sea and land, but between the chinks of the floor of boards you see into air under your feet, and reflect that if a storm swept round the cliff, your frail tenement might be crushed like a house of cards, and descend into the sea far beneath. It was impossible to me, at least, to walk round these balconies without an occasional shudder, and yet we could not hear that the frail supports had ever given way, or that any monks had ever been launched into the air. On the divans running round these aerial guest chambers are beautiful rugs from Smyrna, and from Bulgaria, the ancient gifts from pilgrims and from peasants, which in the rich and vulgar Russian establishments were thrust aside for the gaudy products of modern Constantinople and Athens, while the older and simpler monasteries were content with their soft and mellow colours. The wealth of Athos in these rugs is very great. There were constantly on the mules under us saddle-cloths which would be the glory of an æsthetic drawing-room.

But it is high time for us to take a closer view of the inside of these curious castles, some of which, Vatopédi, Ivíron, Lavra, are almost towns surrounded by great fortifications, and which possess not only large properties, outlying farms, dependencies, but within them a whole population of monks and their retainers. Let us first speak of the treasures accumulated within them, relics of ancient art and industry in the way of books, pictures, and work in precious metals. The reader will doubtless appreciate that the estimate of some of these things depends largely on the taste and education of the visitor. What one thinks of the highest interest another despises as trivial, and this contrast I feel to be very strong when we compare the views of Messrs. Owen and Riley, two sentimental High Churchmen from Oxford, with the views of Mr. Sampson and myself, who both hold strongly to Protestant Christianity. But as Mr. Sampson is an American missionary who never seeks to turn the Greeks from their ancient creed, but rather to infuse some life and spirituality into their practice, so I too am a Churchman decided enough to respect Ritual and Ceremony, when it is the symbol of something real in the hearts of the worshippers. Yet Mr. Riley thinks it of importance, in his excellent book, to enumerate the exact number of chapels contained in, or attached to, each monastery, whereas to me the exact number, and the name of the patron saint, seems about the last detail with which I should trouble my readers. So also these sentimental travellers enumerate with care the alleged relics, and Mr. Riley lets it be seen plainly, not only that he is disposed to believe in their genuineness, but that, if proven, it is of the highest religious importance. To us it did not signify two straws whether the skull or shinbone of the ancient founders, or of some apostle, really did lie in the gaudy shrine constructed to hold it. But seeing the gross ignorance of the monks on all really important matters of history, on the real date and foundation of their several monasteries, we thought that to hear the ascription of the relic to some companion of our Lord, or some worthy of the first four centuries, was simply ridiculous. Any one who speaks of these things as Mr. Riley does, shows he is a bad judge of evidence, or rather he illustrates again a great principle, too often forgotten, that belief is not usually a state of the intellect, but a state of the will.

With this preamble I turn first to the books. All the convents we visited had a library containing MSS. The larger had in

addition many printed books ; in one, for example, which was not rich (*Esphigménu*), we found a fine bound set of Migne's "Fathers." The library room was generally a little closet with very little light, and there was no sign that at any of the typical monasteries anybody ever read in it. The contents indeed consisted of ecclesiastical books, prayer-books, lesson-books, rituals noted for chanting, of which they had working copies in their churches. Still they are so careless concerning the teaching of their old service books that they have completely lost the meaning of the old musical notation, which appears in dots and commas (generally red) over their older texts, and they now follow a new tradition with a new notation. When one has seen some hundreds of these Gospels, and extracts from the Gospels, ranging over several centuries, some written in gold characters on the title-page, with some conventional pictures of the Evangelists, on gold ground, one begins to wonder what could have possessed the good monks to occupy themselves with doing over and over again what had been done hundreds of times, and lay before them in multitudes of adequate copies. I suppose the nature of their religious worship suggests the true answer. As they count it religion to repeat over and over again prayers and lessons all through their nights of vigil and their days of somnolence, so they must have thought it acceptable to God, and a moral deed, to keep copying out, in a fair hand, Gospels that nobody would read, and that nobody would disturb for centuries on dusty shelves.

In the twelve libraries we examined, we did not find more than half-a-dozen secular books, and these of late date, and copies of well-known texts. There may of course be some stray treasures still concealed in nooks and corners, though scholars, like Mr. Lambros of Athens, have spent much labour in classifying and cataloguing these books. But I saw chests here and there in out-of-the-way lumber rooms, with a few books lying in them, and believe that in this way something really useful may still be concealed. In general the monks were friendly and ready to show their books, or at least their perfect manners made them appear so ; but in one monastery (*Stavronikíta*) they were clearly anxious that none of these treasures should be studied. They had not only tossed together all their MSS. which had been properly set in order by Mr. Lambros, but had torn off the labels with which he had numbered them, without any attempt, or I believe intention, of replacing them with new ones.

As I am not now addressing a learned audience, I need not go into details about the particular books which interested us. My main object had been to find, if possible, at Mount Athos some analogy, some parallel, to the splendid school of ornamentation which has left us the 'Book of Kells,' the 'Lindisfarne Gospels,' 'St. Chad's Gospel' at Lichfield, and other such masterpieces of illumination. I had thought it possible that some early Byzantine missionary had found his way to Ireland, and given the first impulse to a school so justly famous. Hence I paid special attention to early illuminated books in the libraries at Athos. I can hardly say whether I was disappointed or not to find that as far as Athos went, the Irish school was perfectly independent, and there was no book which even remotely suggested the marvellous designs of the Book of Kells. On the whole the illuminated books were poor, and of a distressing uniformity. There was ample use of gilding, and a good knowledge of colours. In one or two we found a dozen kinds of birds adequately portrayed in colours—the peacock, pheasant, red-legged partridge, stork, &c., being at once recognisable. But all the capitals were upon the same design, all the bands of ornament were little more than blue diaper on gold ground. There were a good many books in slanting uncials, probably 7th to 9th century; an occasional page or fragment of earlier date, but nothing that we could see of value for fixing the difficulties of a Scripture text. Careful and beautiful handwritings on splendid vellum of the succeeding centuries were there in countless abundance. They are valuable as specimens of handwriting and as nothing else. In many of the libraries the monk in charge was quite intelligent about the date of the MSS., and was able to read the often perplexing colophon in which the century and *indiction* were recorded. But the number of dated MSS. was, alas! very small.

I now turn to the *κειμήλια* or treasures in precious metals and gems, which have often been described and belauded by travellers. Each visitor sees something to admire which the rest pass over in silence, or else he is shown something not shown to the rest. So you must consult first Curzon, then Mr. Tozer, then Didron, then Mr. Riley, and even after that there remain many things to be noted by fresh observers. The fact is that the majority of these reliquaries, pictures, and ornaments of the screen are tawdry and vulgar, either made or renewed lately, and in bad taste. It is only here and there that a splendid old piece

of work strikes you with its strange contrast. Far the most interesting of all the illustrations given by Mr. Riley is that of the nave of one of the Churches, which are all (except the old Church of Karyes), built on exactly the same plan, with small variations as to the lighting, or the outer narthex, or the dimensions. An architect would find these variations highly interesting; to the amateur there seems in them a dreadful sameness. But among the uniform, or nearly uniform, features is a huge candelabrum, not the central one hung from the middle of the dome, but one which encircles it, hung by brass chains from the inner edges of the dome, consisting of twelve (sometimes only ten) straight bands of open-worked brass, of excellent design, joined with hinges, which are set in double eagles (the Byzantine emblem) so that they form large decagons or duodecagons, in the upper edge of which candles are set all round. The design and work of these candelabra appeared to me old. But the monks affirmed that they were now made in Karyes. This I did not believe, and in any case my suspicions as to the antiquity of the design were confirmed by one I found in St. Paul's (Agio Pavlo), which bears on one of the double eagles an inscription that the Hegoumenos had restored and beautified the church in 1850. But this eagle joined brass bands, on which was a plain old German inscription, stating that they were made in Dresden in the year 1660.

By far the finest embroideries in silk were at the rich and splendid Iviron, and indeed their main church has many remarkable features worthy of note. The floor is of exquisite old mosaic, with an inscription of George the Founder, which the monks ascribe to the 10th century. There are lovely Rhodian plaques, both set in the outer wall, and also laid like carpets, with a border of fine design, on the walls of the transept domes. Beside them are remarkable old Byzantine capitals designed of rams' heads. But the great piece of embroidery is a *πóδια* (or apron of the Panagia). The ground is gold and green silk, on which portraits of the three imperial founders are worked—their crowns of pearls, their dresses of white silk, their beards of brown silk, and their faces painted most delicately in colours upon silk. Never in my life have I seen any embroidery so perfect and so precious. There were occasional old crosses of great excellence, but to describe them here would be tedious and useless, unless it be to stimulate the reader to go out and see them for himself; nor can I recommend this, if he be not an experienced

traveller, ready to rough it, and to meet with good temper many obstacles. Travelling in Turkey, where time has no value, and where restrictions upon liberty are both arbitrary and unjustly applied, is a matter of great patience.

What shall we say of the services which go on most of the day and night in these monastic churches, and which seemed to Messrs. Riley and Owen so interesting and so in harmony with the Church of England, that they were never tired of regretting the separation of Anglican from Greek Christianity, and hoping for a union or reunion between them? Mr. Owen went so far as to celebrate the Eucharist after the Anglican ritual in one or two of these churches before a crowd of monks, who could not understand his words, far less the spirit with which our Church approaches the Holy Table. I fear I should use hard words indeed were I to speak my mind concerning the propriety of such a performance. But I am not here concerned with controversy. I am rather to give the reader the impressions produced upon Mr. Sampson and myself by this ancient and curious relic of mediæval religion.

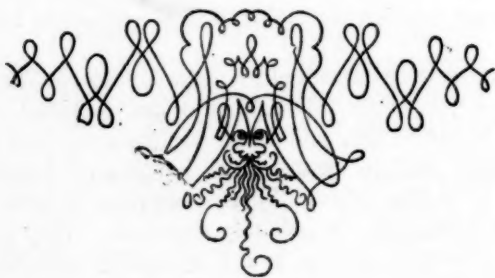
Here were large companies of men, who had given up the world to live on hard fare and strict rule, spending days and nights in the service of God, and resigning the ordinary pleasures and distractions of the world. Surely here there must be some strong impulse, some living faith which sways so many lives. And yet after long and anxious searching for some spiritual life, after hours spent in watching the prayers and austerities of the monks, we could not but come to the conclusion that here was no real religion, that it was a mountain, if not a valley, full of dry bones, upon which the Spirit of God had as yet breathed no life.

It is of course very hazardous for a stranger to assert a negative; there may be, even in this cold and barren ritual, some real breath of spiritual life, and some examples of men who serve God in spirit and in truth. But the general impression, as compared with that of any Western service—Roman Catholic, Protestant, Unitarian—is painfully repulsive. Very possibly no Western man will ever be in real sympathy with Orientals in spiritual matters, and Orientals these monks are in the strictest sense. They put a stress upon orthodoxy as such, which to most of us is incomprehensible. They regard idleness as not inconsistent with the highest and holiest life. They consider the particular kind of food which they eat of far more religious

importance than to avoid excess in eating and drinking. How can we judge such people by our standards? To them it seems to be religion to sit in a stall all night, perhaps keeping their eyes open, but in a vague trance thinking of nothing, and not following one word that is said, while they ignore teaching, preaching, active charity, education of the young, as not worthy of the anchorite and the recluse. To us the *ἀγρυπνία* which we attended seemed the most painful misconception of the service of God ; to the monks this was the very acme of piety.

Whatever therefore the reader may think of the justice of these criticisms, undertaken confessedly from a standpoint so foreign to the Greek Church as to preclude all right on my part to praise or blame it, there is one conclusion which I will fearlessly maintain. Any nominal union between our Church and such a Communion as this, if not tying the living to the dead, the corrupt and decayed to the fresh and vigorous, would certainly be the union of two forms of faith so profoundly different in spirit, that the agreements in letters in the wording of the creeds, would be disastrously misleading. I could understand union with Roman Catholics, as well as with Protestant Dissenters. Any real union with the orthodox Greek Church seems to me spiritually monstrous.

J. P. MAHAFFY.



Delos.

WE came to an isle of flowers
That lay in a trance of sleep,
In a world forgotten of ours,
Far out on a sapphire deep.

Dwellers were none on the island,
And far as the eye could see
From the shore to the central highland
Was never a bush nor tree.

Long, long had her fields lain fallow,
And the drought had dried her rills,
But the vetch and the gourd and mallow
Ran riot on all her hills.

The length of her shoreward level,
High bank and terrace and quay,
Were red with a scarlet revel
Of poppies down to the sea ;

Each bloom pressed close on its fellow,
The marigolds peeped between,
Till the scarlet and the yellow
Had hidden the under-green.

Was it here, that heart of a nation,
That first of the fanes of old !
This garden of desolation,
This ruin of red, of gold ?

High up from the rock-cleft hollow,
Roofed over of Titan hands ;
The cradle of dead Apollo
Still looks to his silent lands.

The sacred lake lies solemn,
In a havoc of fallen shrines ;
Where the shaft of each broken column
Is tangled about with vines.

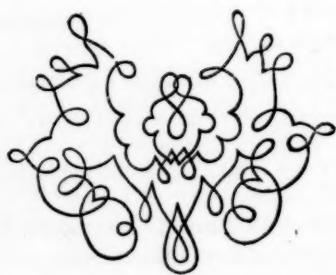
It lives in the dreams which haunt it,
This isle of the Sun-god's birth,
It lives in the songs which vaunt it
The holiest earth on earth.

But the shrines without note or number
Lie wrecked on a barren shore,
And the dead ideals slumber
For ever and evermore.

So Spring in her pride of pity
Had hidden the marble wraith,
And shed on the holy city
The flower of sleep and death.

RENNELL RODD.

DELOS, 1889.



An Adventure with a Burglar.

FEW of us have lived long in the world without numbering among our friends a man with a tale. The delight of our youth, he becomes the bore of our more mature years. He is so proud of his one experience, that he never loses an opportunity of inflicting it upon every new acquaintance, regardless of the fact that all the other occupants of the room have heard it all before.

I am never likely to have another adventure; an unadventurous age and country is not favourable to extraordinary experience, and it would be as unfair as in this case it would be unwelcome, that fortune should allot to one individual the privilege of a second adventure. Perhaps when I have disburdened my mind in print, the temptation to play the part of the family bore may be lessened, and so I here set forth my story once for all.

Some few years ago, when I had just taken my degree, and was deluding myself with the notion that I was doing great things by a course of private reading, I had taken up my abode in the Temple, and I am free to confess I often found it dull. A man cannot always be reading. You know London has its amusements, but they are expensive, especially to him who is not well posted in its ways. So it was with no little satisfaction that one afternoon I found on my table a telegram from an old friend which said, "Come and dine to-night, and stop to-morrow. Want you particularly." It is something to a very young man to feel he is wanted; it is also something to dine comfortably and not at a restaurant; it was even more to me at that moment to have a reasonable excuse for closing my books, and putting off reading to a more convenient season.

A very short time then passed before I found myself in the

south-eastern suburb where my friend, whom I will call Mrs. Barton, lived with her two sons and one daughter. On arriving at the well-known house, I discovered that the reason of the urgent invitation which I had received was that Mrs. Barton's two sons were to be away from home for a day or so, and that she was afraid to be left in the house without any masculine protector. For her dreams were haunted by the terror of waking and finding an armed burglar in her room, and of late her usual state of apprehension had been increased tenfold by an unexampled series of successful burglaries in the immediate neighbourhood of her house. As I well knew from experience gained by staying in the house for months at a time as a child, every precaution against burglars had been taken. Every door and every window was provided with its socket, and every night before retiring to rest a solemn procession was made throughout the house, and a bell was fixed in each socket to warn the sleepers should the dreaded thief enter. Besides this, a huge mastiff slept in the yard. Fortified by this knowledge, though I could not but admit that burglaries both many and daring had but recently been perpetrated, I did my best to dissipate my friend's fears, and was particularly gratified by the confidence she showed in my presence. She believed in me; I did not believe in the burglar scare, and so all parties dined, and went to bed in good spirits.

About half-past one in the morning, however, I was awakened by an agitated knocking at my bedroom door, and the maid's trembling voice bade me get up, as her mistress was quite sure that a burglar was in the house. I fear I only awoke to anathematise all feminine fears, and set down the alarm to an attack of nightmare on the part of Mrs. Barton, whose dreams had taken the shape which might have been expected, considering the nature of her daylight thoughts. A lady's "I'm quite sure" so often resolves itself into "I am quite sure, I thought." Still, as in duty bound, I arose, hastily put on some garments, with an ulster to cover deficiencies, went into one of the son's rooms, which contained a regular armoury of weapons of all sorts, selected a heavy Cape constabulary revolver and a light sword, and strode downstairs to investigate. The agitated faces of the ladies peered out from their bedroom doors; a hurried whisper told them to shut themselves in and keep quiet, and I descended to the first floor, where, notwithstanding my intimate local knowledge, I soon succeeded in

making a horrible noise, shaking first one bell and then another, and giving ample warning to any nocturnal visitor that it was high time to be off, for the household was astir. All seemed right there, so I descended to the basement; there too, search as I might, I could find nothing amiss, till a happy thought struck me, why was the mastiff so quiet in spite of all the noise? I unlocked a door and looked into the yard; there he was, fast asleep, alive evidently, for I could feel his breathing, but a kick in the ribs failed to stir him. The only conclusion to come to was evidently that he had been drugged. This spurred me on to fresh investigations. Even the most intimate acquaintance is not perfectly at home in the lower regions of a friend's house. I tried every door I could see, and at last found one which led into a little pantry cupboard which had a window. The window was open, and one pane had been carefully removed. There had been a man at work! What had become of him?

The house was one of the ordinary large villa type, semi-detached, with a large long garden in the rear, the garden being on a level with the basement, one room of which, that facing the garden, was handsomely furnished, and went by the name of the breakfast-room. Over this breakfast-room was the drawing-room, with its large bow window opening on to a verandah, from which a flight of steps descended to the garden, against the wall which divided our premises from those of the next neighbour's. Under this outside staircase there was naturally a triangular recess which had been fitted with a door, and was used as a store house for garden tools.

I could not find my man, and thought that he had most probably gone, disturbed by the noise which I had made. Still, I hardly liked to go to bed, the extracted window glass and the drugged dog counselled watchfulness, so I strolled into the breakfast-room, opened a case which I knew was the home of some excellent cigars, took one, lighted it, and repaired to the garden, leaving my sword on the table, but taking the loaded pistol with me. The cigar was a large one, and 2 A.M. is not the warmest hour of the night, albeit the month was July. But I had resolved to stay up till that cigar was finished, and finally, after pacing to and fro for some time, I went and leaned up against the door of the tool shed under the drawing-room verandah. There I remained for at least ten minutes or a quarter of an hour, and the cigar was burning very small, when suddenly, without any warning, I was forcibly propelled forward

two or three yards into the midst of the garden by a kick from behind, while the pistol went off as I came with a crash on my nose. My unlooked-for assailant bounded past me, and over the wall into the next garden ere I realized what had happened. Smarting with rage, and not much the worse for my fall, I rushed to the wall, and saw the man going over the wall beyond. A shot from me was followed by a cry of pain and a crash, and I was just in the act of getting over the obstructing wall to see what mischief I had done, when the enemy returned my fire, and a bullet through the bowler hat I was wearing testified to the accuracy of his aim. Thoroughly infuriated by my narrow escape, from my perch on the wall I fired all my remaining three chambers at the now retreating burglar, as he topped each successive garden wall. But the distance, the uncertain light, and the excitement, sent every bullet wide of its mark. In a general way I make no pretensions to pluck, and in fact, to put it mildly, prefer to keep out of harm's way. But the burglar's bullet roused every fighting instinct, and the desire to shoot overcame the fear of being shot. I imagine this must be the case in battle; a man's thoughts as to what his feelings are likely to be in danger, are rarely his actual feelings when the danger comes.

The sound of my fusillade sent up the sashes all over the neighbourhood, and the heads of frightened men and women in all kinds of eccentric costumes appeared at the windows, while a tremendous knocking at Mrs. Barton's front door announced that Policeman X. required to know the why and wherefore of so much unseemly noise. A few words put Policeman X. in possession of the facts; a few moments were lost while I arrayed myself more suitably for a night trip, and I conducted the policeman over the wall to the place where the burglar fell. There we found not a little blood, and then the hitherto phlegmatic and apparently incredulous officer quite brightened up, and turning to me said, "He's hit, sir! we'll catch him, sir." I professed myself ready, and we easily traced the course the man had taken till the gardens ended in a cross road, where more blood marked the pavement; an occasional drop of blood told us we were on the right track for another 150 yards, at which point an enormous piece of waste ground covered with refuse-heaps ran along the side of the road, and beyond this lay the open country.

The officer now sprang his rattle, and in a short time a second

policeman joined us, and with this additional force we commenced to search among the heaps, and at last found the spot where the man had sat down and bandaged his wound, for we found some torn and blood-stained linen. At this moment one of the officers cried out "That's him," as a figure crossed the sky line at the top of the hill in front of us. Off we started again, and from the top of the hill we distinctly saw him get into a field; all three of us ran our best, his wound and a heavy plough crippled the burglar, and I was able to gain rapidly upon him, and before he succeeded in making a thick wood for which he was aiming, I had reduced the distance between us to some fifty yards, the heavy policemen being some way behind. However, the enemy reached his wood in safety, and we all thought it was folly to enter it after him, as he could easily shoot us without being seen, or giving us a chance of retaliating. So we contented ourselves with standing guard as best we could all round the copse; but alas! he never came out, and when daylight came to our aid and we drew the copse, he nowhere appeared.

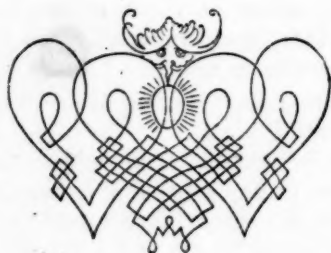
Thus the chase ended, and we had to retire discomfited, and I had nothing more exciting to do than to return and give a description of our midnight visitor as best I could at the police station. Often since have I reflected upon the worth of police descriptions of similar criminals. I know now mine was all wrong, it is not easy to make out the points of a man in the dark or in an uncertain light.

And here the personal element which must have already wearied my readers (if haply I should have any) comes to an end. We heard no more for some fifteen months or year and a half; but we then read in the papers that a certain notorious burglar had been captured, and then that he had been condemned to suffer the last penalty of the law for murder committed in one of his nocturnal expeditions. While the man lay under sentence of death, (whether by way of reparation, or from a mere whim, who shall say?) he seems to have desired where he could do so to restore the property he had stolen. At any rate, he caused to be forwarded to Mrs. Barton's house a small clock, the only thing he had taken from the breakfast-room, with a note to the following effect:—

"With Mr. Peace's compliments to the only gentleman who ever hit him. I did you by going straight through the wood and out the other side."

I have heard since that mine was not a solitary instance of stolen property restored by him at the last. Much as we thought of his wound at the time, it turned out that it was a mere scratch in the arm, which accounts for the speed he was able to maintain in his flight.

Most stories have a moral, except when they narrate real incidents. Mine being of the latter class has none, unless it be in the shape of a warning, that when it comes to shooting, two can play at that game.



Two Voyages.

I.—A STEERAGE PASSAGE.

IT was on a miserably dull and sunless day, in that Liverpool which never looks to me more than barely cheerful even in fine weather, that I went on board the 'Seringapatam,' lying in the Albert Dock, as a steerage passenger to Melbourne. It was my first flight into the outer world of which I have since then seen so much, and being not yet nineteen and intolerably inexperienced, the contrast between what I had known, and the first aspect of what I was to know too well, was very grievous to me. In spite of the fearful joys of that freedom for which I had longed, I was almost ready to return to my North-country home, though I would have died sooner than confess it even to myself.

The quarters to be occupied by the steerage passengers, who numbered about twenty, were in the 'tween-decks abaft the mainmast, and when I saw that "steerage" might be adequately paraphrased only by "Black Hole," I was sorry that I had saved a portion of my money by adopting the cheapest method of crossing half the world. I had never suspected that I was to lie cheek by jowl, four in a bunk, with unclean Irish emigrants of unsavoury aspect and odour, nor that the flourishing list of provisions named on the Passage Ticket meant uneatable food and semi-starvation for one hundred and two days of an unlucky, remarkable, and extremely slow voyage.

Of the twenty men, women, and children who were to be my companions for that long time, the former were either helplessly drunk, or halfway at least to that seemingly desired end, some being irritatingly hilarious, some viciously quarrelsome, and others maudlin and tearful. The deck beneath one's feet in the narrow dark steerage was filthy, and an oil-lamp of vile smell, hung overhead on a wire hook, added most unnecessarily to the sickening odour of mixed humanity, while drops of condensed

foul breath dropped from the deck above upon the unclean tables, encumbered with bundles of clothes, and bursting portmanteaus which had last rested in mud and slush on the damp wharves. The women, who were for the most part unmistakably Irish, sat in this den of discomfort either weeping and disconsolate, or else quarrelling feebly with their dirty brats of children, who wailed or screamed at intervals without cessation; while some few ate bread and strong cheese, which contended, not wholly in vain, with rival smells, and drank stale beer out of long-necked spirit-bottles. It was among such surroundings, with such companions, that I was to pass nearly four months of my life, and though I have suffered, toiled and starved in many parts of the world since then, nothing that I have seen or gone through can ever efface the effect that the 'tween-decks of the 'Seringapatam' had upon me, when I crawled doubtfully down the companion-ladder to survey my temporary home.

Next to us of the steerage, and only divided from it by a few rough boards and a doorway without a door, was the second-class berth, in which I could see three or four young men, more of my own class, sitting in melancholy mood, as though they considered their lot little better than our own, in spite of the higher fare they had paid. As it was among these men that I usually lived, in spite of my being a steerage passenger, I will devote a few words to their description, histories, and character, which will show that I had certainly come to a bright school to learn rascality.

The first in my mind is a man named Broome, whom I got to know extremely well before I reached Australia, and with whom I lived for many months in that country. He was about twenty-seven, tall and very thin, but with broad shoulders as square as the angle between a cow's tail and her straight spine; his eyes were a beautiful bright blue, and on his pale cheeks blazed two spots of hectic colour. He looked as if he were dying, but he was, as a matter of fact, just recovering from a long and severe illness. Whether he had been sent on this voyage for the sake of his health, or, as he said, because he had made his native town too hot to hold him, I cannot say; but if his appearance suggested the one, his uncommon recklessness, which, apparent at first, increased immensely as he improved in health, made the other at least as likely. But Broome was a gentleman by manners and education, and as such, stood a head and shoulders above his berth-mates.

Next to him I remember an unmistakable English cad, just one remove from an 'Arry, who always said he was *Mr.* Jackson, if asked his name. He had small nondescript-coloured eyes, no complexion, large hands and feet, a vile London accent, and to add to those original sins, he wore serge clothes of the colour affected by low Italians round Saffron Hill. I could pardon the effrontery with which he told us that he was obliged to leave England because he had embezzled money from his employer in order to take a trip to France, but I could never forgive the hue of his garments.

A tall, fine-looking man of about thirty, named Cotton, was with us, because he had, in his capacity as agent for a Manchester house, ordered a quantity of linen goods which he had sold for his own benefit. It was due to the exertions of his family that he had only been punished by exile, and not imprisonment.

There was also a consumptive pawnbroker's assistant, named Beaumont, and Harry Salton, a Yorkshireman, and a fine healthy specimen of a country-bred Englishman. Beaumont was considered a criminal, and humorously called a "fence," on account of his trade; but Salton had done nothing disgraceful, as far as could be learnt, which was a sort of distinction in the second cabin, where the only other man I have not named, Harrison, was sent out of the country because, having persistently refused to earn a living for himself, he had managed to exist in a more disgraceful manner. If I have never quite succeeded in fitting myself for companionship on equal terms with such as my new acquaintances, it is probably owing to a natural obstinacy which inclines me to go my own way towards good or towards evil; but if I had showed a little more plasticity and pliability of character, I might have graduated as a first-class scoundrel in the shortest time on record, considering the able coaches around me on all sides.

Our ship was still lying in the dock, where she was to remain till early morning, while I was in the company of these young men, and when I got sick both of them and the tainted atmosphere, I went ashore to prowls round curiously in the lowest parts of Back Goree, where the worst slums of Liverpool are situated. The villainous faces of crimps and loafers passed me as I hurried on, taking instinctive care not to loiter or look about too much. Since that day I have rambled in the evildest parts of many great cities, and have rarely been molested so long as I put on the air of having business in that quarter, and

looked as if I were going somewhere in particular. Yet I wonder I did not fall a victim to my rashness and undimmed natural verdure, when I ventured, having much money on me, into dens and drinking places that I should now never think of entering unless in company with a policeman or detective. But I was drawn on and fascinated by the rampant disorder that I saw round me. I passed down back alleys and courts, and dimly-lighted slums, and standing in foul doorways to let some hideous nocturnal procession pass, I heard fouler language, and saw things and faces that made my flesh crawl with horror. I heard fights and oaths, and dreadful yells, and sometimes the sound of broken glass and crockery as a jug came through a dirt-grimed window and struck the opposing obscene wall. When at last I went on board ship, it was with a feeling of relief and escape, and as I stumbled down the awkward ladder into the reeking atmosphere of the 'tween-decks, I was thankful even for that refuge from the human animals beyond the high dock walls. Yes, even though my three bunk-companions were half intoxicated and loathsome. By the dawn of day we were at sea, behind a tug that steamed against half a gale from the south-west.

Of our whole crew, only the captain, the two mates and four apprentices were English, and the remainder a queer motley conglomeration of Hindoos, Malays, and Kroomen from Africa, who outnumbered the white men, even when all the passengers were counted in. For the 'Seringapatam' was a large full-rigged ship of more than 1600 tons register, and carried forty-five Lascars, where some eighteen Englishmen would have been deemed amply sufficient. We had all types of countenances on board, from the finely cut faces of some higher-caste Hindoos to those possessed by poor inferior fellows with whom they would not eat; to the semi-Papuan physiognomy of the Malays, and the negrine character of the big-limbed Krooman. The serang, or bo'son, of this various-coloured Calashee crowd was a Malay of a short stout figure, with a scant bristly brush of a moustache, and twinkling black eyes, who soon got to know me so well, that I often heard him demanding "where Robert, where Robert?" if he wanted me to help him in deciphering the tallies of the sails in the sail locker, when his want of knowledge of writing and the impatience of the others left him helpless and bewildered among a pile of pieces of wood which he was to attach to the sails they named. The chief steward was a Hindoo, with the

most delicate clearly cut features I ever saw on a man, while his complexion was comparatively light. Although very small-boned and slender, he was strangely powerful for his build, and could do tricks of strength with his lady-like wrist and fingers which puzzled even the biggest among us, and I daresay even the Krooman, who was a negro Hercules, might have found him no mean opponent.

I had plenty of opportunity for observation, for I was not, indeed I never have been, sea-sick in the least ; so while most of my new acquaintances were groaning over their misdeeds in the truest repentance they were ever likely to feel, I was able to keep the decks with Broome, who, having been a sailor for some years, was unaffected by the heavy sea into which we dived close-hauled. For a fortnight we had one breeze after another, and "breeze" in the sailor's sense of the word means something extremely like a storm, for leaving England in the last week in September, we got all the cream of the equinoctial gales, enjoying at last in the Bay of Biscay a real "snorter" for three days, during which we were hove to under the lower maintopsail. It was the first storm I had ever seen at sea, and I so thoroughly delighted in it, that no sooner did I get drenched through on deck, than I went below to change my clothes only in order that I might come up to be again soused in the lee scuppers. The '*Seringapatam*' was a very "wet ship," that is, she was very much inclined to ship heavy seas, so when she rolled to windward every now and again, one came on board and filled the main deck, while the water poured over the fok'sle head like a cataract ; and if it took away the scuttle there, as it sometimes did, the water rushed through the men's quarters like a mill stream. But my chief interest was naturally in the unfortunate steerage, and not there.

When this gale had been blowing tremendously hard for twenty-four hours, it blew much harder for another twenty-four, and finally exhausted its energy in a terrific burst, which did not then in the least alarm me, as I was almost ignorant that it really was a "living gale." But if I thought little of it, the Irishmen and women did not, and believed their last hour was come, as they sat or kneeled, praying, howling, screaming and wailing loud or low in the intervals of sea-sickness, while the water washed about on the dirty decks, and the chests, breaking their lashings, threatened to brain those who attempted to control their motions. The hatch above was kept closed, and

by night and day the oil-lamp swung to and fro, or round and round, dimly illuminating our den, the atmosphere of which became closer and fouler yet than it was at the best of times, while each roll or heavy pitch of the labouring vessel was greeted with heartrending howls of anguish, or groans of despair. The only time I saw these folks take the least interest in what any one else did or said was when I incurred the wrath of two of the women. As I was coming down below, and was just about to shut the door of the booby-hatch, the vessel gave a very heavy lee roll; the lashings of the ladder parted, leaving me swinging in the air, until a sea came over the weather rail, and rushing down to leeward, shut the door on the finger-nails of my right hand. I let go, and on reaching the deck I swore, very naturally as I think under the circumstances, considering that I was also wetted to the skin by the water which came in on top of me; but my excited language roused the fiercest wrath of these two devout Catholics, who screamed with horror at me and vowed I should sink the ship. In calm weather they did not mind far worse language in the least, and their husbands and brothers swore on in sunshine unreprieved; but now I had to retreat from them into the second cabin and wait until they calmed down, which they did not wholly do until it was evident that the vessel was not sinking, and that the gale was blowing itself out.

I was soon on very bad terms with some of the men in the steerage, whose ways were naturally very displeasing to me, for my ideas of refinement had not been acquired in a mud cabin along with a pig. I daresay I was a little bumptious too, which perhaps irritated them, but at any rate I was almost always on the verge of a row with one or the other of them. Hence I was naturally driven into the second cabin, where men were whose notions of cleanliness were more on a par with my own, or into the company of the Lascars, who were always civil and kind to me. I have sat for many hours in their quarters, which did not smell as bad as my own, even if there were some strange odours with which I was unacquainted, talking and making signs to a Malay or Hindoo, even making friends of one of the big Kroomen, who, though possessed of the finest physique on board, was lower in intelligence than the lowest of the others. A few of them understood some English, and I gradually picked up a little Hindostanee and a few Malay phrases; but my chief Oriental chum was a bright-eyed, lithe-limbed lad from the French Indian Settlement, who always went by the name of Pondicherry.

He could talk a sort of French very fluently, and as I had some knowledge of that language, he would interpret for or to me. I think I have been in few stranger places than that fok'sle at night with the dim light vaguely illuminating the swarthy faces and the flashing eyes of that mixed Oriental crew, as they sat round me smoking and talking garrulously in a strange Babel of tongues and dialects, while my own figure and comparatively fair complexion added, I dare say, to the interest of the scene in a way I could not then comprehend, but which now requires little imagination to conceive.

Pondicherry never got to understand how it was I knew French, and often tried to make me explain; but my attempts simply added to his bewilderment. My own impression is that he thought French was a language only spoken at his native place, for he was always trying to inveigle me into an acknowledgment that I had been there, and when I denied it, he shook his head mysteriously.

These men often offered me something to eat, which, when it was not shark ten days old, I was often glad enough to accept, for the steerage fare was as insufficient in quantity as it was vile in quality; indeed, if it had not been occasionally supplemented by the good-will of the Hindoo cooks, or men, and a fair supply of hard biscuit, which was the only thing I found always eatable, I might have gone as hungry on board ship as I have since been on the tramp in Australia or America.

We had been forty-seven days out from Liverpool when we at last drifted over the line, for after the final gale in the Bay of Biscay, we had experienced nothing but light or contrary winds, and the north-east trades were just at that season conspicuous by their absence. Or if they blew, it was only faintly. But when we caught the south-east trades, they, as if to make up for the shortcomings of the northern winds, blew almost tempestuously, and we ran through their latitudes under shortened canvas. When we commenced to run our easting down and get to the southward of the Cape, we began to have a lively time. It is a popular superstition that Cape Horn is the most tempestuous place in the world, for although it knows how to blow there and to blow tremendously hard, the sea, though it runs high, is always comparatively regular. The Cape of Good Hope, or 'the Cape' *par excellence*, has, however, a broken choppy sea, owing to the various currents meeting there, and the variability of the winds, which makes it a far more dangerous place than its more feared

and colder brother promontory at the south of America. Yet the cold to the southward of the Cape was severe enough as we rounded it, and some of the Lascars, who feel such weather extremely, hid themselves and refused to go aloft. They were like the sergeant of the Black West Indian Regiment who remarked to his officer that "it was too cold for brave to-day," and some of those who were smart and active when it was warm, were the worst skulkers when the weather changed for the worse. For though they clothed themselves with every garment they possessed, until there was a small quantity of Lascar to a large quantity of clothing, they still shivered in a most extraordinary manner. I remember it had been blowing hard all one day from the south-west in heavy squalls, with some sleet mingled with cold rain, and on going on deck late in the evening I saw Mahomet, a rather good-looking Hindoo, who had once offered me some ancient shark which fairly took my breath away, standing under the break of the poop looking so cold and miserable that I thought, in spite of his unaccustomed bulk, he was insufficiently clothed. I asked him if it was so, and I found he had on two coats, two waistcoats, and *seven* shirts, while over all he wore his oilskins.

My friend Tom, the big Krooman, turned sulky and refused to do any work, although exercise would have kept him from being blue with cold. The mate, Mr. Mackintosh, a regular old sea-dog, who had been seventeen years before the mast before he thought of getting a second officer's certificate, had the man handcuffed and brought aft on the poop. And poor Tom's endurance, if foolish, was really splendid. He lay on the wheel-gratings without shelter, and with no more clothing than shirt and trousers, for four whole days, during which it sometimes snowed and oftener rained; nor would the officers allow him more covering lest he might elect to stay there if he were made too comfortable. He had nothing given him to eat but biscuits, and he drank only water; but still he would not return to work. On the third day the captain, who was by no means a brutal man, offered to release him if he would only condescend to go into the sail locker and make sinnet (a kind of plait made of rope yarns). I was standing near, pitying the poor devil, and hoped he would take the offer. But no; Tom shook his head, he would do nothing. At last, in the evening of the fourth day he caved in, for the night looked as if it would be bitterly cold, and he was assisted forward to his bunk, where some hot coffee was given him. It had been pitiful to see that

huge black Hercules, lying there curled up in an animal-like bunch, with his skin turned a sort of dull blue, shivering violently, but as firm and obstinate as adamant in making a martyr of himself; although it was difficult to see what other course could be taken with him, considering that if he had beaten the officers, the others, who were only too ready to skulk, would have imitated his example. Yet I used to wonder what thoughts were passing through his thick skull when I was on the poop at night and saw him there, for when I said to him quietly, "Tom, go to work and don't be a fool," he only looked at me dully, shrugged his tremendous shoulders, and shivered until I gave him a piece of tobacco. But he bore no malice to the officers for what they had done, and when the weather became warmer he was as fine and willing a worker as any on the ship.

The Lascars behaved very differently from Tom, and not having the courage to absolutely refuse to do anything, they tried malingering or shamming. Sometimes they deceived the captain; but more often the sight of the dreadful dose of castor-oil, which was his universal remedy in suspected cases, restored them to sudden health and vigour. It was only the very determined ones who had the courage to swallow the nauseous dose, even although they were ensured a few idle hours by taking it.

Few incidents of importance occurred from the time we were well to the eastward of the Cape, until we were south of Cape Leeuwin, the most westerly point of the great Australian Bight, beyond a few rows among us in the steerage, which was becoming, for unspeakable reasons, almost uninhabitable by a person of any cleanliness, and the broaching of the cargo by the second-class passengers, who, by drawing some nails with great skill, managed to steal several cases of the finest Irish whiskey.

Strange as it may seem from what occurred off the Leeuwin, our captain was a total abstainer. But to make up for this sobriety, his wife, a fine handsome woman she was, invariably took too much to drink when it blew heavily, and increased her doses in proportion to the violence of the storm. Thus she was, as we often remarked, a registering barometer, that did not foretell heavy weather, but only recorded it, and her being moderately excited with liquor indicated that it was blowing a stiff breeze, while her wild appearance and staggering gait were sufficient, without any other evidence of the senses, to show that we were

under storm canvas. But never until the gale off the Leeuwin did she entirely lose control over herself and finally become insensible, which shows that the weather there surpassed in violence anything we had experienced in the Bay or off the Cape of Good Hope. And indeed this was so.

It had been Mr. Mackintosh's middle watch that night, and not liking the look of the weather, he took in some of the lighter canvas just before he went below at four o'clock. The second mate, Mr. Ladd, although the weather grew worse yet, did not shorten sail further, and when the captain came on deck he ordered those sails to be set which Mackintosh had stowed four hours previously. The second officer stared a little when he received his superior's orders, but of course said nothing, although the wind was now coming in heavy puffs from the west, and the sea was rising rapidly. By this time, from my own experience and from the face of Ladd, I could see we were probably in for a heavy gale, and boy-like, I was pleased at the prospect. For within certain limits a storm at sea always exhilarates me in a most marked degree, and I am never so merry as when it blows hard. This, too, promised to be a sight worth seeing, for there was no sign of rain, and the sky was not quite overclouded until noon, by which time the wind was reaching its maximum. During the first few hours the sun shone brightly through the drifting clouds; the waves rose higher and higher, yet in great blue masses tipped with foam that suddenly dropped, as if their foundations had been instantly rent away, to leave great hollows and swirls coloured light blue and green, where the foam-bubbles and driven air mingled with the purer blue; while down the leeward side of the vast valleys ran thin ribands of white, and to windward the gale drew, as it were, a brush across the lifted wall, marking it with bands, notching it here and there, and at the summit turning it to pure white and foam-smoke, that streamed out on the level wind.

At eight o'clock Mr. Mackintosh came on deck again, and as he stood near me I could see he was angry at the conduct of the captain. I suppose Ladd told him what had happened, for he only greeted his superior officer with a rather surly "good morning," and made no remark to him. With the skipper on deck taking an interest in matters, it was no part of his duty to shorten sail, and within a quarter of an hour it was put beyond any one's power to again furl the sails he had taken in at first, for the skysail and three royals suddenly disappeared, leaving only a

few fragments attached to the yards. Every one who was on deck expected to hear the order to shorten sail, but our unmoved skipper hardly took notice of what was happening, and walked up and down the poop, smoking his pipe in the most undisturbed manner. I am almost afraid that sailors will not believe that any one in command of a big vessel could act as he did, but I am ready to vouch for the truth of every word I set down here, and can even bring corroborative evidence. For not one sail did the captain order to be stowed save the mainsail, which was driving her almost under the water. That was taken in with infinite labour at ten o'clock, but though the force of the wind momentarily increased until it blew a hurricane, he never even tried to reef the topsails before they went. Before that, the three topgallant sails vanished one by one, and then two of the three upper topsails were blown out of their bolt-ropes with a report like thunder, and inside of half an hour the mizen and main lower topsails followed suit. Then the cro'jack sheets parted, and that was flogging the yard in ribbons. The only sail we saved in fair condition was the upper main topsail, and that the two mates, the Serang, two quarter-masters, Broome, Salton and myself took in. For by this time I was quite accustomed to go aloft, and we volunteered because most of the Lascars and Malays were fairly frightened and would not leave the deck. They stowed themselves away in every hole and corner they could find, and out of forty-five there were only three in the topsail yard with us.

I have said it was blowing a hurricane, and I mean what I say. Since then I have seen it blow hard, and I had known some bad weather, as I have said, in the Bay and off the Cape; but this fairly came out ahead of anything I have ever known for violence, though it scarcely rained during the whole thirty-six hours it lasted, and still remained warm. The torn and driven sea, under the rainless canopy of low drifting clouds, was cruel and ghastly to look at, and the waves were as big as the rollers off the Horn. When I went up aloft I had nothing on but an old cap, a cotton shirt and a pair of old trousers; but when I came down I was minus the shirt, for it had been ripped into pieces which struck me about the face, until I had assisted the wind with my hands and got rid of it, and my cap, which blew off and went so far that I did not see it drop. We were up aloft for two hours, and though the sea ran heavier and heavier, and the rolling and pitching of the vessel increased more and

more, I dare to say that I still found it very interesting. As we tugged at the bellying sail that stretched out in front of us as stiff as a board, I found time at intervals to cast a look down upon the raging gulf below, and the narrow wet deck which was sometimes beneath us and then suddenly to our right or left. As we pitched, the water came in over the bows and poured in a white and green cataract over the fok'sle head ; as we rolled, it came in great masses over the rail, until it filled up the main deck and escaped through the stove in ballast ports and scupper holes. Sometimes the following sea even overtook and pooped us, that is, come in over the stern, and poured down on the main deck. It was fortunate for us that we did not injure or lose our rudder, for if we had come broadside on to the wind, it would have been good-bye for all of us. When we had the topsail stowed in some sort of a fashion we went down and got some whiskey, for, strange to say, our teetotal captain let us have as much as we wanted. And some of us appeared to want a great deal, for about three o'clock, Mackintosh, Ladd, Salton and Broome were all very drunk indeed. It may appear invidious of me to claim the distinction of being the only tolerably sober man among those who did any work, but as a matter of fact this was so, for even the apprentices were "half-seas over."

A little after four o'clock I quitted the deck for a little while to put on another coat, and came up again in less than five minutes to see Mr. Ladd sitting in the main hatch, smothered in blood. I ran up in great alarm and asked him what the matter was. He emitted a tremendous volley of oaths, and ended by roaring, "Mutiny! mutiny!" I left him and went forward. Just by the cook's galley I met Mr. Mackintosh, in a worse plight, if possible, than the second officer, for the blood was streaming from a cut in his head, one eye was quite closed up, and the rest of his face was hardly to be distinguished. He too was swearing, and, holding on to the deckhouse, he likewise roared "Mutiny!" I caught his arm, guided him to the main hatch, where a sea presently washed over them, and ran to meet Salton and Broome, who were coming forward, telling them what I had gathered vaguely, that the mates had gone into the fok'sle to turn, the men out to work and had got severely thrashed for their pains. We all looked at each other and at the Lascars, who were standing in a crowd at the port door of the fok'sle armed with handspikes and belaying-pins, and without further enquiry Broome rushed into the cook's

galley on one side, seized a long carving-knife, and emerged from the other uttering a howl like a fiend's. Salton produced a sixshooter, and I, not to be behind-hand, grabbed an iron belaying-pin. I had no distinct notion of what we were to do, but I followed Broome, who sprang into the fok'sle at a bound. There were some forty men inside, and we were three; but I verily believe Broome would have charged an army at that moment, and our audacity carried the day. To say the Lascars ran like sheep would be to put it mildly; for they yelled with terror, and fled like smoke before the wind. In half a minute they were crowded on the deck outside. Broome was threatening to have the life of any one who murmured, and Salton made first one and then the other cower and shrink by pointing his sixshooter at him. I came near getting my skull cracked, and was hit slightly on the shoulder. But when I was in the open again I recovered some slight degree of common sense, and rushed off for the captain. Surely the man was the strangest mixture of courage and cowardice I ever saw, for though he was white and almost trembling, he came forward without a weapon. We were both knocked down by a sea close to the main hatch, where the mates were still sitting, but when we picked ourselves up, we went towards the crew. The captain ordered them into the fok'sle again, and they went like lambs, for Salton joined in with his weapon. Then he commanded Broome to put down his knife. No, he would do nothing of the sort, but danced a kind of wild war-dance in the forehatch, vowing he would have blood for blood, while his cheeks blazed with two red spots and his bright eyes glared most wonderfully. Then the skipper told Salton to take the knife away. Harry suggested he should do it himself. Meanwhile I was edging up to Broome and put in a word, for I had a great deal of influence over him when he was mad like that, as I proved often and often afterwards in Melbourne. But he would not listen, and still flourished the knife. Now I don't know whether it was brave of me or only foolhardy, but I got behind him, put my arm round his neck and pulled him over backwards. The knife flew out of his grasp and was picked up, and when Broome was picked up too, he showed no irritation at the way I had served him. Then the captain commanded Salton to give up his weapon, which he promptly and most decidedly declined doing. As no one would volunteer to face the battery, the captain adopted another course, and told Salton to see that every one

went below. He was very proud of his deputed authority, and I, having no wish to be pent up in the foul 'tween-decks until it pleased me to go there, had to go up aloft to get out of his way. Then the captain and I escorted the mates to their respective bunks, and all was quiet except the gale, which was now at its height. I stood under the break of the poop and watched it for some time. It was now past five o'clock.

The sea was a wonderful sight, and the ship, as it drove through the waves with most of its sails torn in fragments, which whipped and knotted themselves into ropes on the yards, seemed like a flying creature tormented by strong invisible hands. The decks of the '*Seringapatam*' were continually full of water, and the ballast ports having been wrenched and beaten out, it was hazardous in the extreme to venture forward. Yet at such a time the captain's wife and the young girl passenger came out of the saloon on to the main deck.

Mrs. — was as pale as death ; the girl was flushed fiery red ; both were most disgracefully intoxicated and could scarcely stand. I was really shocked beyond measure and ashamed ; but being the only person then on the main deck, I did not think it right to allow them to stay in a place where even a sober man was in danger ; so I opened the saloon door and pushed the girl in first, and after her the captain's wife, who fell down, and for a moment prevented me shutting the door. Just at that moment a heavy sea came on board and poured into the open saloon, thoroughly drenching the two women. I rolled the eldest in unceremoniously, and jamming the door to, left them struggling to rise.

I have got so far in the narrative, and in spite of what I said some pages back about my fearing lest some should disbelieve me, I have now to relate something still more incredible even to myself as I recall it, than any thing that I have yet written. Perhaps it is not quite impossible that a captain should obstinately stand to lose almost a whole suit of sails, although it is foolish enough, but that the same man should go below, when both his officers were drunk and incapable, and leave his ship to the care of the carpenter, who was not a sailor, seems like a fable. And yet it is just this that our skipper did. He ordered "*Chips*" to stay on deck from eight to twelve, and call him at midnight, and then coolly went below and turned in. At midnight the man duly summoned the captain, who did not turn out, and without waiting to be relieved, went to his bunk. Thus from twelve

till two there was nobody on deck but the men at the wheel, for the Lascar whose look-out it was remained in the fok'sle, taking advantage of there being no officer of the watch. And we nearly paid a dreadful penalty for the criminal negligence our commander displayed. At three bells, or half-past one, the helmsmen were so near losing control over the vessel, that she almost came broadside on to the waves, and shipped a tremendous sea on the starboard side, as if the whole ocean were coming on board. I heard a terrific shock over my head, and then the rush and roar of the water as it washed over the rail, and poured down through every crack in the hatch into the 'tween-decks. It was some ten minutes before she cleared herself sufficiently of the sea for us to get on deck, and then we could see what happened. The after boat on the starboard side, which had been lifted some ten feet above our heads by "skids" or "strongbacks," was lying on the deck in fragments, and the skids were smashed and splintered as well. Some well-lashed 400-gallon tanks had disappeared overboard with them and the harness casks where the salt meat was kept; a kind of bridge running from the poop towards the mainmast, which carried a large standard compass, had gone too, together with its valuable burden, and some of the iron stanchions, which were beaten and twisted out of all shape. The brass rail on the starboard side of the poop was gone, and the box where the signalling flags were kept. It was only the task of a moment to take this in with the eye, for there were loud bellows for help from the mate's berth. It seems that the wreck of the boat had been launched against his windows, staving them in, and admitting sufficient water to fill the berth up above the level of the highest bunk. The cold bath had roused him from his drunken slumbers, and he, fearing to be drowned like a rat in his hole, was imploring aid from all and sundry to help him open his door, which was jammed hard by the great weight of water inside. It took three of us to release him, and then we went into the saloon, which was fairly afloat, for one of the doors had been burst open by the same sea. It was a melancholy sight and not a little disgusting, for the captain's wife was sitting in pronounced *deshabille*, in a foot of water, vowing she should be drowned, and imploring us to dive in, so to speak, and bring her to dry land. As for the captain, he was now on deck.

In the early morning, when I went up, although it was still blowing fairly hard, it was no longer a tempest, and the

sea was rapidly subsiding. But the vessel looked a wreck although she had lost no spars, with the torn sails, the flying gear, the broken skids, and stove-in ports, while the second mate looked worse yet, being ornamented with two black eyes and innumerable scars. He grinned at me in a somewhat shame-faced manner, but said little. When Mr. Mackintosh came on deck I could have roared with laughter to see the two together, eyeing each other as if to say, "He's rather worse than I am myself," and as if calculating how much difference in value there might be between two badly swelled lips and a nose apparently knocked on one side. But the Lascars, the very men who had beaten these two for trying to get them to work the day before, were now as obsequious as slaves, and hurried to do the bidding of their officers, without a smile on their faces, although I dare say they chuckled inwardly at the aspect of their superiors. I never knew if the captain reprimanded them, but I think not, as he was to blame for allowing every one to drink as much as he pleased, nor was his own conduct extremely praiseworthy, as any one, I think, will allow.

From that time forward, until we reached Melbourne, a fortnight later, everything went smoothly. There were no more rows and no more drinking matches. Mrs. — came on deck as calmly as ever; the young passenger behaved as usual, the captain was as silent and quiet as before. And as for us, we prayed for land, without knowing what we were to suffer when we got there. For myself, I confess to feeling a strange chillness about the heart when we anchored in Hobson's Bay and saw before us the distant city of Melbourne in the dust-coloured land which was to be our new home, and as I paced the decks of the 'Seringapatam' for the last time, I was almost sorry to think that the assurance of daily victuals and nightly lodging, though both were vile, had come to an end, and that I was to shift for myself, like a young bear with all my troubles before me. And certainly there were many to come.

MORLEY ROBERTS.



Comedy of a Country House.

BY JULIAN STURGIS.

AUTHOR OF "THEALDOM," "JOHN MAIDMENT," ETC.

CHAPTER XXIII.

WHEN the men, who had gone to the smoking-room, at last appeared, the first of the neighbours had already come and were standing about, waiting for the music to begin, and uncomfortably conscious of the feeling of superiority which distinguished those who had dined in the house. Dora had given up all hope of an immediate explanation with her husband; and, as she awaited the music, her courage was ready to respond. She resolved not to think of her husband during that evening; she would keep her task clear before her; she awaited the trumpets. Quick-eyed and alert, she marked the coming of the smokers and among them her lord, whom she would straightway dismiss from her mind. In the same minute she noted an absence also. There was no Leonard Vale among them. She supposed that he would appear presently with a new flower or some such extravagant explanation of delay; but, when the dancing began and still he did not come, she began to wonder.

"Isn't it sad about poor Lenny?" asked a soft voice beside her, and turning, she looked into the sympathetic brown eyes of Mrs. Chauncey.

"What's the matter with him?"

"Oh, he is very seedy," said Clara. "Such a dreadful headache! He could not face the ball. Poor fellow! It is such a disappointment! He was so looking forward to it!"

It was a string of soft emphatic sentences.

"What a pity!" said Dora simply.

"I ran up to see him, poor dear!" said Clara, "just for a minute, and to take him my salts. Are you dreadfully shocked?"

The child-like eyes seemed to ask the question quite seriously.

"Not at all," answered Dora, laughing.

"I thought you would be," said Clara gravely; "but he and I are such old friends; that does make a difference, doesn't it? You would never do such a thing, I am sure."

"Don't be sure of anything," said Dora rather tartly. The soft voice irritated her; it seemed as if it would put her to sleep, when she needed to be very wide awake. As for Lenny's absence, that was a distinct relief. It was an embarrassment the less. She had ignored this cause of embarrassment, when she had considered the presence of her husband; but now, when she was certain that Leonard would not come near her during all that fateful evening, she felt a surprising relief. Suddenly, the presence of her lord and master appeared less troublesome. To some extent he would distract her, but after all not much. There was Archie, the poor boy in danger, the rich boy so hard beset; there before her eyes was her duty, the object of her care. She could give all her mind to this duty, and postpone all thought of her husband till the morrow. This absence of Mr. Vale certainly simplified the situation.

As the rooms filled, her spirit rose; social feeling and the atmosphere of the dance possessed her; and, as the music of the valse penetrated with gaiety and sadness flowed around her, there was pleasure too. Young, brilliant and brave, she was sure of herself and of the future.

Indeed she needed all her confidence. As the rooms filled, a rumour began to move among the people. The man latest from London had brought it in the day's number of the new Society paper. It was a rumour of an engagement. Dora's quick ears were among the first to catch it; half a sentence spoken halfway down the room had told her all, and the expression of a fat lady, who was shaking the hand of her host, confirmed it. One glance at Archie's face showed how serious was the crisis.

"Have you heard it?" asked Clara, who was again at her elbow.

"What?" asked Dora quickly.

"The engagement."

"Whose?"

"Poor young Lord Lorrilaire."

"No; I don't believe it," said Dora stoutly. Her eyes were

fixed on Archie ; she hoped still ; and yet, though her words were bold, she feared.

"Lenny told me," said Clara softly.

"How did he know ?"

"I don't know," said Clara innocently ; "he had heard it somehow ; I think that it was that which made him ill ; he is quite knocked over by it ; it was a bold stroke of Lady Jane."

"Did she send it to the paper ?"

"So Lenny says."

"Lenny!" cried Dora impatiently ; "how feeble of him ! how weak he is ! Why isn't he here instead of lying down with a smelling-bottle ?"

"Poor Lenny !" murmured Clara.

"He is the only person who knows anything, and I can't see him."

"I suppose not," murmured Clara.

"If he has any proof that Lady Jane sent the paragraph, I would go straight to Archie and show him this crude trap. He would be ashamed to step into such a thing. Do you know ? What did he say to you ? Has he any proof ?"

"Oh, I am so sorry," said Clara, looking with round, innocent eyes ; "I never thought of it. If you could only see him for a minute ! In an hour it may be too late."

Dora looked across the room and actually trembled. Archie was not with Miss Lock ; that was the only comfort ; she could not see the girl, who was not one to be hidden in a crowd ; but at any moment this eminent maiden might sail back into the room, and Archie might go to her and lead her out again. Dora saw it all almost as clearly as if the scene were there.

"He said," continued Clara, with a little infantine pout, "that nobody but you could do anything ; that, if he could see you for one minute, he could tell you."

"Why doesn't he come ?"

"He really could not. He looks so dreadfully ill. He would terrify the room. Of course I told him that it was impossible for you to go to him."

"You went," said Dora shortly.

"Oh, I am so different. I said that you would never dare."

"Dare ?" cried Dora, as at the sound of a trumpet ; "I dare everything."

"Oh, no," objected Clara softly, but firmly, "I really think not."

"How ridiculous!" cried Dora angrily; "what is it? to run up to the Tower Wing for a minute? I would do something really dangerous to save Archie from that woman. To send a paragraph herself about her own daughter! If I could prove that, I would save him even at the last moment."

"Lenny has the proof," murmured Clara.

"Then why don't you fetch it?"

"Really, dear," said Clara with a little laugh, "I can't keep on running up to the Tower Wing. Of course it is nothing, as you say; but the truth is that I have been up twice already; and besides, he won't tell me anything; he is racked with pain, poor fellow! and he won't say anything except that nobody but you can do anything and that he must see you. I tried to explain to the poor creature that it was out of the question."

"Why is it out of the question?"

"Isn't it out of the question? I thought that you were so conventional."

"Conventional!" cried Dora full of scorn, and with eyes still fixed on Archie.

"Isn't it out of the question?" repeated Clara. Dora answered nothing, but continued to gaze across the room.

"Would you go?" asked Clara, with the tone and air of a child who persists in asking wearisome innocent questions.

"No," said Dora; "certainly not."

As the words left her lips, she saw Archie move and go towards the door at the further end of the room. She saw that, without obvious intention, she could reach the doorway at the same time. She started from Clara's side, gained her goal, and turning, found Archie's face not two yards away. There was a slight block at the doorway; he could not force a passage; she had time to look at him; she had never seen his face so grave. She felt the imminence of the crisis; she perceived, most momentous sign of all, that he did not even see her.

There was a movement in the little crowd, and Archie, advancing, passed a man, who instantly laid a hand on his arm and murmured some question with a fatuous friendly smile. There could be no doubt what that question was. "I am afraid I am not so fortunate," said Archie rather stiffly. The mere words were comforting to Dora, but the tone was equivocal, and his looks filled her with uneasiness. He made his way through

the doorway, passing close to her and without a sign of recognition ; there was an alarming air of purpose about him. "Is it true?" asked somebody on Dora's other side.

"Oh, I think so," answered another ; "it always is true in that family."

Dora set her little teeth and began to make her way in the wake of the threatened youth. She had scarcely moved, when she was stopped short by a firm impediment. Lady Jane was in the path, firm and strong, like a rock of red sandstone. "Dear Mrs. Rutherford !" she said with frank geniality.

"Yes?" said Dora feebly, fearing that the next words would announce the awful fact.

"How very ill you are looking !" said Lady Jane.

"Thanks," said Dora, moving as if she would pass. But the crowd remained, and Lady Jane blocked the easiest passage.

"I am quite distressed," said Lady Jane ; "you look so flushed and nervous. Perhaps the sudden appearance of your husband"—She finished her sympathetic speech with a strident laugh.

"You are, as always, too kind," said Dora quickly, pushing forward as she spoke. But Lady Jane Lock was not an easy woman to pass in a doorway. Low of stature, and very firmly planted on her feet, she barred the way to anybody who was not active enough to leap over her.

"You young married women," she said, "go in a great deal too much for excitement. I shall speak to Mr. Rutherford about you. I shall recommend a good long spell of quiet life in the country."

"With you, I hope," said Dora quickly ; "will you let me pass, please?"

"Why, whom are you looking for? I am sure you are very flattering to him. We did not have to run after our partners. How sad about poor Mr. Vale, isn't it?"

"Very," said Dora ; "but I must go. I am looking for Archie."

"For Archie!" exclaimed Lady Jane, in apparent surprise ; "ain't you afraid of being *de trop*?" The triumph in her eye was maddening. Wild suggestions came to Dora ; she was impelled by some memory of pantomime tricks to point to something behind her obstructor, and to slip by, as she turned, or to trip her up, if need were. Prudence, or a sense of the decorum which the world required, prevented the ignominious prostration of Lady Jane Lock.

"I am never afraid of being *de trop* with Archie," Dora said bravely, and was answered by nothing but a laugh full of intention and discord. Dora could stand no more; trembling with indignation, she turned her back on the enemy, and retraced her steps with speed. She went straight to Clara.

"I will go," she said.

"I will go first and tell him," cried Clara promptly.

"Quick then!" cried Dora; "that is better; I shall find you there."

"Yes," said Clara.

"O that woman! Anything to beat her! Quick," she added, pushing Clara by the arm; "quick! I can only be away two minutes."

Little Mrs. Chauncey slipped away from the room. She had a talent for gliding here and there, through crowds and other obstacles, and always unobserved.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Dora was right in thinking that the face of young Lord Lorrilaire was eloquent of purpose. When he had passed the doorway in which Lady Jane Lock had barred the passage of Mrs. Rutherford, he walked straight and quickly across the room beyond to the opposite door. This door led into one of those smaller rooms which careful ball-givers prepare for conversation; and here Elizabeth Lock was sitting with a young man, who had been her partner in the last dance. Two or three people made way for Archie, as he came, with knowing looks; a young couple came out from the little room as he reached the door; and, as he entered, the young man rose from beside Miss Lock. Elizabeth rose too, as if she would return with him to the ball-room; but Archie went straight to her with so plain a claim on her attention, that the other youth, after a minute's hesitation, smiled and bowed, and went out alone. He had scarcely passed the doorway, when Archie had asked Elizabeth to be his wife. The exact form of words had been settled as he crossed the outer room.

"Oh, thank you," said the girl with heartfelt gratitude; she held out her hand to him with the frankest cordiality. He took her hand respectfully in his, staring at her with wonder; he had expected success, but not gratitude; he did not know what to say.

"It is so good of you to ask me," she said.

"Good of me?" he asked, still wondering.

"Yes, and I thank you with all my heart," she answered, and she shook his hand before she let it go.

"Then it's all right," he said rather stupidly; "it's agreed then; you will marry me?"

"No, no, no!"

"What!"

"Did you think that I would be so mean?" she asked indignantly; "did you think that I would marry a man because he asks me because people talk? I can't express myself properly, but you know what I mean; you know that you only ask me because people are talking, and you are generous and nice and not like other men, and so you come and say this, and I can never thank you enough. It has been so horrid! I hated to run after you in London, and I hated coming here, and staying and staying, and getting new gowns at the end of the season, and I almost hated you; I should have hated you if I hadn't liked you; and now there's some horrid gossip in some paper, and so you come to ask me, and it is so awfully good of you and I shall never forget it."

Archie had not a word to say. The girl had spoken quickly and eagerly, as if she had long wished to say the words. She looked so frank, so honest, and so friendly, that he did not doubt her for a moment.

"What can I say?" he said. "You must not think that I——" And here he stopped, and she laughed.

"You know that what I say is true," she said; "so do let us say no more, and take me back to the ball-room."

But he still stood looking at her rather foolishly. He was relieved, but yet not much; he was almost offended by her extreme pleasure in refusing him; he was grateful but not gratified; he would have liked to see in her a little regret, a suspicion of tenderness, a shade of doubt.

"What am I to say?" he asked at last. "When I go out of this room people will come to congratulate me."

"Not if we go out together," she said.

"But we can't stay together, since you won't have it so," he said rather gloomily.

"Say there is nothing in it," she said; "and so will I. It will be much harder for me, for women never will let one alone; they are much more curious than men."

"I shall say that you won't take me," said Archie.

"Oh, please don't," she said; "I should have such a dreadful row with mother."

He laughed at the change in her voice, but without much enjoyment. "You will have to tell her," he said.

"Yes," she said; "more or less, to-morrow; I want to be happy now; so take me back, please." She looked so kind and glorious, that he wondered if he were not foolish to yield so easily to her wishes. "I shall have to tell mother to-morrow," she said; "but I shall put most of the blame on you."

"What a shame!" he said, and he began to laugh again.

"It won't hurt you," she said, "and I shall catch it enough any way. I shall only say that you only said what you said because it was expected of you, and that it was impossible for any girl to say, Yes."

"But that's not true," he said.

"It was impossible for me to say, Yes."

"Why?"

"You mustn't ask that," she said quickly; "you will begin it all over again."

"Well, why not?" This time it was he who held out his hand to her.

"No, no, no," she said again. "You are really glad to be free."

He would have protested; but a voice, or so it seemed, from deep within him said plainly that he would be glad when he woke in the morning. So he kept silence. He was still standing first on one leg and then on the other, unwilling to go or stay, conscious of the unsatisfactoriness of things, not knowing what to say, when a dancing young man, conscious of nothing but the importance of dancing every dance and each with the proper person, hurried in and claimed Miss Lock. She promptly put her hand on the arm of the new-comer, and with a last look full of friendship and intelligence for the rejected Archie, passed out into the more brilliant light of the ball-room, while her new partner chirped of floors and music.

Archie, flushed, excited, provoked, amused, felt no wish to follow the girl, and a strong wish to avoid the crowd for a few minutes at least. He pushed aside the muslin curtains which draped the long window, and opening the window itself, passed through it into the great tent, which covered the terrace. In

the tent too there were some people, and he fancied curious looks and comments ; and so he turned again and went out from the tent and down the steps, which led from the terrace to the park. It was a night most wonderfully fair for this late autumn time, and, flushed as he was, Archie felt only an agreeable coolness as he met the air. He drew a deep breath from the sweet night, but the next moment, before he had stepped from the lowest step to the grass, he started. He was close to the shrubbery which concealed the little door of the old secret staircase of the Tower wing ; and in the shadow of this shrubbery he spied the flutter of white drapery and heard a deep sepulchral tone. Was it the family ghost ? With half-attentive ear he had received the tale of the distinguished Rayner ghost. What if, whenever the representative of the family had been rejected, that Castle Spectre were condemned to walk ?

"Ninety-nine !" said slowly and solemnly the same deep voice, and Archie put his hand on his mouth that he might not stop the ceremony with untimely laughter. Tony had led a partner forth to view the beauty of the night, and then, as he considered the rashness of the act, and the danger of a sudden chill, sentiment had given place to science and he had begun to demonstrate to the astonished maiden the method of his salutary exercise.

"Ninety-nine, ninety-nine, ninety-nine !" repeated the Castle Spectre in pursuit of health ; and Archie now allowed his laughter natural way, but it was stopped at the first note by a scream. The incantation ceased ; Tony's disciple screamed in sympathy ; and Archie, leaping through the small shrubbery, found Clara Chauncey leaning against the wall, pale and breathless. The door was half-open beside her.

"What is it ?" asked Clara, gasping, conscious of a human presence.

"It's Tony," said Archie.

"Oh ! oh !" gasped Clara ; "how silly of me ! I thought it was your ghost—the family ghost—they are the only things I am afraid of. A minute, and I shall be all right."

Supporting herself against the wall with one hand, she pulled the little door to with the other. "Oh, Mr. Tony," she said, as Mr. Fotheringham and his partner now appeared, "I shall never forgive you. My nerves !"

"If it's your nerves," said Tony, "you can't do anything better than this exercise, which I was just showing to Miss Robertson.

You bend a little forward, you see, and go up and down so, and you keep saying, 'Ninety-nine!'"

"It is a comfort to see you," said Clara, "and to know that you are human."

The girl, who now felt herself informally introduced, asked if she could do nothing for Mrs. Chauncey; but Clara declined all help, saying with emphasis that she would be quite well in a minute, and rebuking Tony for allowing his partner to stand about in the open air. Thus aroused to a full sense of his iniquity, Mr. Fotheringham tucked Miss Robertson's hand within his arm and hurried her away to the safer atmosphere of the tent.

"We must go too," said Clara with a deprecating smile. She was aware that Archie was regarding her with some curiosity and was wondering how she came there. She stood straight that she might test her steadiness, and Archie offered her his arm; but as they began to move, they heard a stumbling noise behind them, and in another moment the little door was burst open again, and a man rushed out. In his haste he dashed against Archie, who seized him and held him fast. Archie saw that it was Leonard Vale. "What is it?" he asked, shaking him not too gently, for the fugitive was panting and seemed incapable of speech. He looked from him to Clara, who seemed to have recovered all her strength. "Here! you look after him," he cried, pushing Lenny to Clara; "and I'll see what's the matter." Leonard made a clutch at him as if he would prevent him from going, but Archie, striking aside his arm, dashed through the door and up the secret staircase.

CHAPTER XXV.

When Dora had made up her mind to visit the Tower Wing, she made no delay. Only a few moments she waited, that Clara Chauncey might have time to say that she was coming, and then she too slipped away from the ball-room. Upstairs she ran, hurrying, as people hurry who wish to give themselves no time for hesitation. By this time she knew the house well, and she had no need to stop and think before she reached the Tower Wing and stood at the door of Leonard Vale's den. Nor did she stop there; she knocked at once and sharply on the door, and so soon as he had answered, she turned the handle

and went in. She caught her breath ; she felt the dim luxury of the room, the shaded lights and sumptuous things ; she saw Leonard Vale standing opposite, near to the window, his hands on the back of a chair. She looked quickly for another figure.

"Where is Mrs. Chauncey?" she asked.

"Mrs. Chauncey? Clara?" he said vaguely; "what do you want of Clara Chauncey?"

Dora closed the door and came a step nearer, saying eagerly,

"She says that you have some proof that Lady Jane sent that paragraph to the paper; it is my only chance of stopping Archie's marriage; you must tell me quick; I can't stay a minute?"

"Not stay?" he murmured.

"Only a minute. Quick!"

"Not stay," he repeated, "when you've done so much for me; when you've come here, here to my rooms, here to me?"

Dora looked at him with growing displeasure. As she saw more clearly in the dim light, his pale face seemed to be flushed unnaturally, and his eyes had a glassy look.

"Tell me at once," she said firmly and distinctly, "what you know of Lady Jane and the paper; tell me at once, or I shall go."

"Oh, don't go," he said plaintively.

"Will you tell me?" she asked, and she moved backward to the door and put her hand on the handle.

As she went back, he came forward. "Why don't you trust me, Dora?" he asked.

"Dora! How dare you?" she cried out in answer.

"And how dare you!" he cried with sudden anger; "it's too late for these airs. What right have you to be so charming and so cold?"

Dora stamped her foot upon the floor. "Stay where you are," she said, and he stood still. "Now tell me, if you can think and speak, what proof you can give me that Lady Jane Lock sent that paragraph about Archie's engagement to the paper. That is all which I choose to hear. Tell me that, and don't say a word more, and take care how you speak to me."

"And take care how you speak to me," he answered fiercely; "you've gone too far for that. What would your Lady Jane say if she knew that you were here now with me, alone with me?"

"Are you threatening me?"

"No—yes—I don't know what I say; you make me mad."

He stumbled over the footstool as he came, and caught the table that he might steady himself.

Dora had turned the handle of the door, but now in the moment's silence she stood still with the door half-open in her hand. "Be still!" she said in a whisper; "there is somebody coming." She peered into the passage, which was almost dark; but a light hung on the wall at the far end, and, if any one were coming, she would see him there. She heard a fatuous laugh behind her, but she could waste no time in scorn; she watched the light. In a minute she drew back into the room with her hand pressed against her side. "It's Tom," she said, "my husband."

As she fell back from the door, Lenny rushed at it. "The key's gone," he cried—"here, quick, this way!" He dashed open the door of his bedroom; "there's a way through, a staircase; I'll show you—quick! for God's sake, quick!"

"No," said Dora, "I won't run from my husband."

"Are you mad? Come."

"You must explain," she said.

"Explain! Curse the woman! Will you come?" He caught her by the arm, but she wrenched herself from his hand. "Will you come?" he cried; "do you think I'll stay here to be murdered? Damn you!" He rushed into his bedroom, and in the next moment the door from the passage was opened and Tom Rutherford came in. Dora had retreated further back into the room; tumultuous feelings, shame, scorn, and fear, possessed her; she stood erect with an effort; she would not touch the table on which that man had leant.

"Who was with you here?" asked her husband.

"How dare you speak to me like that?" she cried out at him, and then suddenly sank down upon a chair, and was shaken with a dry sobbing, for no tears came.

He did not come a step nearer. "Tell me who was with you," he said.

She made a great effort to control her sobs, and suddenly she sat up listening; she heard sounds of somebody coming from the bedroom; she was in amazement; she could not think that he was coming back. The door, which Lenny had slammed behind him, was opened, and Archie came quickly into the room. He was out of breath; he looked quickly from husband to wife.

Tom stepped towards him with relief plainly written in his face. "It was you who just left Dora?" he said.

"Yes," said Archie.

CHAPTER XXVI.

When the night had passed, reaction came with the morning. The cold light of a day of late November displayed the seamy side of all the bravery of the ball. Without and within men were removing decorations, which adorned no more; on the terrace lay bare poles where the gay pavilion had stood. The hothouse-flowers, a little dissipated and weary, had gone back to their hothouses; the hothouse women, their petals also touched here and there by glare of light and too late hours, were sleeping in their beds. In the rooms servants were busy restoring things to their usual places; other servants slipped silently down the passages with little trays for the late risers. Only the eminently energetic appeared at the breakfast-table; and among them the most eminent of the energetic, Lady Jane Lock.

Lady Jane had slept less soundly than she was wont to sleep. Who knows what visions had haunted her admirable pillow? Had she dreamed of the names of dressmakers, staymakers, carriage-makers, or, calculated incomes in her sleep, and estimated gems? Doubts, as she lay on this side, hopes, as she lay on that, these were her portion. She had supped well too and at a late hour. Is it strange that she was restless? She awoke hot and irritable; she was inclined to linger on her couch; but a sense of duty made her rise, a sense of duty and an overpowering curiosity. She could not believe but that all would be well; and yet she was beset again and again by uneasy doubt. How far did she understand Lord Lorrilaire? and how far did she understand her own child? It was this latter question which exasperated her. She stole across the passage in her dressing-gown and slippers to see if Elizabeth were yet awake; but Elizabeth was sleeping like an infant, with a smile upon her lips. She was inclined to shake her child; but she knew well how much might depend on her child looking well on that day, and with admirable self-control she refrained. She would not mar such beauty-sleep which might be worth—what might it not be worth in solid cash? She went back to her own chamber and finished her toilet. Even when she was completely dressed, her daughter was still sleeping; and the good mother descended the staircase, anxious, curious, but summoning all her forces, that she might bear herself with dignity before

critical feminine eyes. She only hoped that Susan Dormer would not be there.

Susan Dormer was there. When Lady Jane entered the dining-room, and saw her friend smiling vaguely over the tea-pot, it seemed to her mere malice in that restful lady to come down so early on the morning after a ball. There was only one other woman present, and she was a vigorous young lady, who, perhaps for lack of other charms, made a point of proving on all occasions that she needed no female indulgence, and could rough it like a man. She had trotted backwards and forwards between her place and the side-table, and, as she would have put it, had done herself remarkably well. Two ladies, and not more than three men, of whom one was Mr. Fotheringham, who had risen for health's sake, were dotted here and there at the large table; and it did seem to Lady Jane that Susan could have joined the small party for no other object than her aggravation.

Susan smiled on her too with such provoking amiability, as she poured out her tea and gave it to her, as she always gave it to her in spite of daily instructions, black and bitter.

"Mr. Tony was telling us such a strange tale as you came in," said Mrs. Dormer; "he was wandering about in the park, and heard a female shriek, and I don't know what. I have not the least idea what it is all about, but I am sure that it is dreadfully improper."

"Who shrieked?" asked Lady Jane, turning upon Tony.

"Oh, it was nothing," said Tony, abashed; "she only took me for the good old ghost."

"You for a ghost!"

"Yes, you see I was just doing my little exercise—you know it, don't you, Lady Jane?"

"No."

"It's awfully good for you, you know; you just bend your body——"

"My dear Mr. Tony," said Mrs. Dormer, "you really must spare us the details; I am sure they are most improper; and besides, poor dear Jane is not good at bending, are you, dear?"

To this Lady Jane returned no answer; and her friend continued: "Well, there was a female shriek, and a lady at the foot of the old tower stairs with her hand on her heart, gasping, and my nephew Archie flying to her support——"

Lady Jane looked up now, and felt herself burning.

"Ah," said Susan Dormer, answering her friend's unspoken question, "Mr. Tony is dreadfully discreet; he won't tell us the lady's name. And I am sure there is a mystery; for now I hear that Leonard Vale has gone to London by the milk train and in his dress-clothes; and no human being ever before travelled by the milk train in dress-clothes."

"Has he gone alone?" asked Lady Jane, savagely, as she set down her cup of bitterness.

"Presumably, my dear," said Mrs. Dormer.

"I thought perhaps——" began Lady Jane.

"Oh, naturally, dear," said Mrs. Dormer, suavely.

"And Mr. Tony will not divulge the lady's name?" said Lady Jane again. "Perhaps he knows if the gentleman has gone alone?"

"He hasn't taken his man," said Tony, innocently.

Mrs. Dormer began to laugh.

"But the story is not ended yet, Jane," she said; "Lenny went by the milk train——"

"Lenny!" exclaimed Lady Jane, with disapproval.

"And who do you think went by the next?"

"I really can't say," said Lady Jane, "and I do not care to guess."

"Archie," said Mrs. Dormer.

"What?" cried out the other lady. Awful doubts rushed in upon her. What was this? Had Archie fled? Was this the end? She half rose.

"Oh," said her friend Susan, "he has gone an hour ago; you can't catch him."

At this the manly young lady could not suppress a squeak of appreciation; and a minute later Tony, who was rather slow at perceiving the force of a speech, nearly choked over his cup. Then was seen the true strength of an indomitable little woman. Lady Jane controlled herself with an heroic effort. She did not plump down again into her seat, though her knees were loosened. She left her place and walked bravely round to her hostess, with her teacup in her hand.

"I do wish, Susan," she said, "that you would not try to poison me."

"Oh, good gracious!" said Mrs. Dormer.

"Kindly fill my cup up with hot water. Has your nephew gone for long?" she asked, as she returned to her place.

It was a sublime example of female courage; her heart was

beating wildly as she asked the question. Perhaps Susan Dormer felt a little sorry for her friend. It is certain that after regarding her for a minute with a gentle contemplative air, and with her little mouth innocently ajar, she answered her question with a small dose of encouragement.

"He may come back," she said; "he did change his clothes, but he has taken no others with him, and his man is to wait for orders. If he doesn't send for luggage you are safe."

Lady Jane laughed, but the laughter sounded harsh even in her own ears.

"I certainly hope to see him come back," she said; "he was not here to receive us, and if he is not here to say good-bye, I shall certainly think him the strangest host that I have ever met."

Her voice almost broke before she reached the end of her sentence; she felt as if she could not speak another word upon the subject. But now, to her great relief, another batch of guests made their appearance, and among them Mr. and Mrs. Rutherford. Dora and her husband came into the room together. Lady Jane Lock looked at them curiously, and with no friendly regard; but if there were any change in either of them, it was too subtle for the somewhat dull perception of this lady. Dora sat down at once at the table, and her husband got her some breakfast.

"We are obliged to be prompt," he said to Mrs. Dormer, "for we go by the 11.30. Oh no, thanks," he added, in answer to a vague murmur of his hostess; "please don't bother Sir Villiers: he has enough to attend to; I have ordered a fly."

Lady Jane, listening, was tormented by new doubts. Was Mrs. Rutherford going because her defence of Lord Lorrilaire was no longer necessary, or because she had given up this defence in despair? Or was her husband taking her away for reasons of his own?"

"You know that Archie has gone?" asked Mrs. Dormer.

"Yes," said Tom; "he sent a line to my room to say that he should not be here to say good-bye."

"And Mr. Vale too," said Lady Jane, whom anxiety and irritability would not suffer to be silent; "it appears that Mr. Vale has gone off in his dress-clothes, and in what Susan calls the milk train. Is it not extraordinary? I say there must be some joke in it, and I am sure that Mrs. Rutherford is in the jest."

"No," said Dora.

"Do you mean to say that *you* ain't in the secret?"

Dora looked up as if she were ready to engage, but only shook her head slightly and drank her tea.

"If you have done your breakfast," her husband said to her, "you had better see if your maid has finished the packing; she ought to be off in ten minutes."

He rose, as he spoke, with his watch in his hand, and there was a general rise of those who had breakfasted, among whom Dora left the room.

CHAPTER XXVII.

When Archie reached London, the day was still young; he drove straight to Leonard Vale's lodgings. The sitting-room, into which the visitor was shown, suggested yesterday's atmosphere, a faint smell of dust, a faint smell of patchouli. A blousy housemaid, with her cap awry, who in the absence of the gentleman's gentleman had admitted the visitor to this sanctum, now pounded on the bedroom door. Lenny was lying down within, but, when he had learned who awaited him and a certain time had passed, he came out, clad gorgeously in a silken smoking-suit, but looking white and angry. They exchanged no words of greeting, and there was an awkward pause.

"Well, what is it?" asked Leonard at last, with a forced laugh; "I don't know what right you've got to question me, but fire away."

"I don't want to question you," said Archie; "I know enough."

"Well then what do you want? I am deucedly tired, and, if you've nothing to say, I'll go to bed." He spoke with a sickly air of indifference.

"I only came to tell you," said Archie, "that you mustn't live any more in my house."

"Your house! your house!" cried out the other with sudden fury; "I was there before you ever dreamed of owning it; but it's always the way.—Put a beggar on horseback!"

"I never begged," said Archie.

"I suppose you mean that I did."

"No, not from me at least," said Archie; "I pressed it on you."

"You needn't remind me that I am in your pay; I know it well enough," said Leonard Vale bitterly.

"Never mind that," said Archie; "we need not go into that; you seem to be comfortable enough here anyway—only would you mind my opening the window? I am a lunatic for fresh air." He waited a minute, and then, as Leonard said nothing, he pushed open the window.

"I may liveh ere then?" asked Leonard presently, with all the sarcasm which he could command.

"Live where you like, except in any house of mine," said Archie bluntly.

"And I suppose," said Lenny, after a pause, "that you will announce to the world that you have been obliged to turn me out of the house."

"I shall announce nothing to the world," said Archie. "The world is not likely to be violently excited about the matter; nor would the world think it strange that I take my house into my own hands."

"Then we are all to get the sack," said Leonard with his aggravating levity, "the great Sir Villiers and Mrs. Dormer and I."

"No—only you at present," said Archie.

"What have I done? What the devil do you——" began Leonard furiously.

"I'll tell you what you have done," said Archie; "you have so behaved yourself in my house——"

"Your house!"

"You have so behaved yourself in my house," repeated Archie, "that you have come near to compromising my dearest friend."

"Behaviour! Compromising!" exclaimed Leonard Vale with a sneer. "Where have you lived? What have I done that any man of the world would not think fair?"

"I don't care," said Archie, "what your man of the world would think. I act as I think myself. I think it wrong—for one thing—to make love to another man's wife."

Leonard looked at him with unfeigned astonishment. He was somewhat relieved also, inferring rapidly that his benefactor knew only this part of his conduct. "If I am to hear a sermon," he said, "I should like to sit down—only you will have the room so plaguy cold."

Archie saw that the other's white teeth were almost chattering in his head. He said nothing, but went to the window and shut it. Then Leonard sank into a low chair, doubling his smoking-

coat about his chest with his long white hands and huddling himself together as if for warmth.

"And when it comes," said Archie, "to trying to entangle a woman who means no sort of harm——"

Lenny laughed, and Archie turned upon him with sudden anger. "You don't dare to hint any harm of Dora Rutherford," he said.

"No. Curse it! No," said Leonard Vale; "who wants to hint, or to speak either? Why will you take things like that?" he went on plaintively; "it's making a fuss about nothing—about nothing but a little harmless flirtation. She didn't mind."

"Take care what you say," said Archie. "If you ever say a word against her, or annoy her in any way—I'll put it so that your man of the world can understand—payment stops."

"Who wants to say a word against her," said Leonard, almost whining, "except that she's a heartless coquette? That's what she is, a heartless coquette. She made me mad, and then she turned on me with her confounded Puritan airs. Yes, I know that I got out of hand. My excuse is that I was drunk."

"Oh, that's your excuse? That a good excuse in the eyes of your man of the world? You ought not to be drunk when you talk to a lady!"

"It was deuced bad form," said Lenny lightly.

"And it was deuced bad form to run away," said Archie grimly.

Thereupon Leonard Vale broke into blasphemies. "Oh, my God!" he cried at last, shaking and holding hard to the arms of his chair. "Will you take a challenge to the man? I'll cross to-night by the Calais boat; I'll go anywhere and wait any time if he'll only meet me."

"You would have done better to wait at the time," said Archie.

"Don't I tell you that I was drunk?" said Leonard fiercely.

"And so, because you were drunk," said Archie, "and being drunk behaved uncommonly badly, you want my friend to cross the Channel for a chance of being killed."

"I know the fellow's a coward," said Lenny between his teeth; "I know he wouldn't meet me."

"You can say that," said Archie, "if it's any comfort to you; but you know that you don't believe it. I think he would kill you if it came to killing, but that's not the point."

"Well anyway," cried the recumbent youth, "I wish to heaven you would go. This room is mine anyway, and I don't see why I should be baited." He spoke with one of his sudden changes of manner, as if he gave everything up, and nothing were important but permission to lie limp in his well-stuffed chair.

"I'll go," said Archie; "I've said what I had to say." He stopped with his hand on the door and looked at his cousin, and, as he looked upon his prostrate feebleness, his ready pity returned. After all, this was so little like a man, so weak, so little dangerous. To be angry with such an one seemed as vain as to be afraid of him. He sprawled there a scarcely responsible product of luxury, indulgence, and corruption. There came back to Archie's mind a warning of John Stuart Mill, who had written somewhere that we had yet to see what a generation would be which had grown up without romance. Here seemed a specimen of this generation, to whom romance was as absurd as duty, gaping for pleasure but without energy for its pursuit. It was a comfort to Archie to transfer his indignation from this prostrate youth to the Materialism of the Age. "By God!" he said, with an unusual violence of expression, "it would be better to break stones! Why can't you find something to do?"

Leonard only rolled himself in his place; but then there dawned on him a speech which might give pain, and he said—

"You don't do much."

Archie was rather startled; he frankly recognised a certain element of truth.

"That's true," he said; "but I shall try to do something, and if you'll ever try, come to me and I'll help you."

Even as he spoke, hopelessness possessed him; his words sounded like mockery. Perhaps the other youth received them in this way. He yawned and groaned as if weary of phrases. It struck Archie that no communication, but that of a fever, could fix this wandering attention. To take money he would probably put out his hand. Archie regarded him with exasperation and pity. What could he say? His words had that uncomfortable trick, too common in words, of assuming a character which he did not mean them to assume. He cast about for some new form of speech.

"Anything must be better," he said at last with emphasis, "than spending one's life in sneaking about after women."

But Leonard only answered with a sort of howl, in which derision, weariness, remorse, found voice.

"Good-bye," said Archie, feeling that he had been a fool to wait with his hand on the door; and he went out now and shut the door firmly behind him.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

When Archie left Leonard Vale's lodgings, he had good reason to be pleased with his success. He had pursued this doubtful cousin to town, but anxiety had been his comrade on the way. Before he left Langley he had received a little hurriedly-pencilled note from Dora; and from this unhappy little note, and from that which he himself had seen, he had inferred Leonard's conduct of the previous evening with sufficient accuracy. Still he had pursued him with great anxiety, for he had been unable to prophesy what this man might or might not say or do; he had felt as if he were advancing on to a quicksand; he had been forced to believe in a weakness which he had not imagined possible, and which might be harder to deal with than all the resources of consummate strength and courage. To no motive was he certain of being able to appeal but to self-interest alone; and he feared that this shifting soul was capable of forming the most erroneous and inconsistent opinions even of his own interests. He could not rest until he had seen Leonard and said what he had to say, but he had not hoped that the interview would be short and satisfactory.

As Archie summed up the results of the interview, he confessed himself fortunate. Leonard Vale had accepted his decree of banishment; and that meant the conclusion of a most disagreeable matter. Also he had made no serious attempt to defend his conduct except by the plea of drunkenness. Also—and this was the really important matter—he had made no attempt to blame Dora. He had shown bitterness and spite; he had tried to assume the tiresome old devil-may-care manner in speaking of women in general, the eternal knowingness of immature youth, the sickly flavour of legions of second-rate French novels; but all this only emphasised the fact that he did not pretend that any one but himself alone was to blame for the unfortunate situation of the evening before. Archie now felt sure that Lenny had mastered that most obvious view of what was good for him, which was the mere view of cash. If no better motive ruled his tongue, or kept him from annoying Dora Rutherford, the few words about his allowance, which it had cost

Archie so disagreeable an effort to say, would be sufficiently effective. Archie himself, as he left behind him the prostrate youth and the faint close odours, began at once to believe in the possibility of the better motives. His persistent optimism began to grow again with its accustomed vigour; he could not help thinking that even Lenny would be capable of some chivalrous feeling for the woman whom his folly and vanity had led into a position so painful. Already he was considering what occupation he could hope to find for this difficult young man, when he had leisure for the search.

At present Archie had not leisure. One task was done, but others no less difficult remained before him. He went to the Rutherfords' house and was told that they would arrive there in time for luncheon. He left a card, having written on it the name of the hotel at which he meant to stay for the next day or two; he thought that he would receive a letter there. He was very unquiet. He walked the pavements, stopping now and then to stare into shop windows with indifferent eyes, thinking many thoughts and most of them uneasy. He supposed that all the party were melting away from Langley Castle; he imagined their expressions of surprise and regret at his absence; their good opinion seemed more important than usual. This vision of flies and luggage reminded him of something which he must do; he turned into a telegraph office and telegraphed for a portmanteau of clothes. Then he walked about again; it was as if a gadfly stung him; the gadfly was a little word which he had spoken the night before. The little word was a lie. Had he been right or wrong? The very spring of his faith had always been that no good came of lies.

As he grew tired, he grew more doubtful, more depressed. He remembered that he had been hard on Lenny, and with justice; but was he one who had a right to mete out justice so severe? He almost thought at times that he ought to return to Lenny, to tell him the conclusion of the story, and let him have his turn at blaming. Walking moodily towards his hotel he met Clara Chauncey driving westward from the station in her rather shabby Victoria; she faced the pleasant sunlight, and her eyes were closed; she looked like a cat, faintly smiling; he could almost fancy that he heard her purring, as she was borne smoothly past.

All through the long evening, which he spent at the hotel, Archie was expecting a note from Dora, or perhaps from Tom;

but no note came. In the morning there was no note. He became more and more uneasy. The long morning passed slowly away, and in the early afternoon he went again to the Rutherfords' house.

Archie felt guilty as he rang Tom Rutherford's bell. It was awfully plain to him that he was going unasked to the house of a man whom he had injured. He caught himself walking softly, as he followed the servant to the stairs, lest Tom should hear and recognise his footsteps. Such feelings, such conduct in himself, were unbearable to him; a quick end must be put to them; and yet he must consider Dora and her interests most dearly of all.

When the servant had gone, and Dora and Archie looked each at the other, both were filled with pity. They pressed each other's hands, looking pitifully. If Archie looked weary and out of sorts, Dora appeared in his eyes to be seriously ill. Hers was a beauty, of which much was brilliancy; and now the bright colour was faded, and the bright eyes were dull. She sank into a seat, when she had held his hand for a minute, with an air of lassitude which he had never seen in her before.

"Where is Tom?" he asked.

"He's out," she answered, and Archie was ashamed of his feeling of relief.

"It is his usual time," she added, with a faint smile; "he always walks or rides in the afternoon; everything is just as usual."

Her tone was inexpressibly dreary.

"I thought you would have written to me at the hotel," said Archie.

"He saw your card when we arrived," said Dora, "and didn't say a word. I dared not write."

"Oh! come," said Archie, trying to speak less dismally, "things aren't so bad as that."

"Yes, they are," said Dora; "I can't tell you how bad they are. It's dreadful—every moment is dreadful. I can't bear it. Only one day has gone and I feel as if I had been in prison for years. It sounds pathetic, doesn't it?" She asked it with a feeble smile, as if she tried to mock herself.

Archie said some common words of encouragement, and she continued—

"This morning everything began just as if we had never been away—as if nothing had happened."

"After all, it was nothing," said Archie.

"Nothing except that I shall never be happy any more."

"Oh, Dora!"

"No," she said, shaking her head; "you can't understand it; no man could understand. When I heard the door of his study shut this morning precisely at the usual time, it was as if the prison-door closed on my life. Every day he will sit there with his papers and blue-books, and every day I shall sit here, wondering every moment what he believes about me, what he thinks of me, if he ever thinks of me at all. Every moment will be like a drop of water falling on my head, till my brain gives way. He has not asked a single question since he held the door open for me to go out of that hateful room—it seems a month ago. He has not said one word of blame; he has been perfectly kind and courteous, and already I have wished again and again that he would break out and curse me, swear at me, as that—that—have you seen him?"

"Yes, I have seen him," said Archie; "and that ought to be some comfort to you any way, for he is heartily ashamed of himself, and I can promise you that he will trouble you no more. He has no excuse except that he was drunk. He has not a word to say against you."

"What could he say against me?" she asked; "oh yes, he could say things and truly. He could say that I was a conceited fool, who thought myself so worldly-wise that I could do things which other women could not do. Oh, when I think of myself, and my self-sufficiency and ridiculous airs, I could laugh at myself if I did not hate myself so; and when I think of him and remember how he spoke and looked—— He smelt of brandy."

The last words were spoken in a whisper, as if they told of the most awful fact in the world. "I can't get away from it," she said; "I can smell the brandy now. I feel degraded, smirched—as if I could never be clean any more."

"No, no," said Archie, "you must not make mountains out of molehills. I tell you that the fellow will never trouble you any more."

"And I thought that I was converting him," said Dora with a tremulous laugh.

After this they sank into an uncomfortable silence for a time. The silence was broken by the ringing of the front-door bell, at which they both started, and then looked guiltily at each other. They heard the front door opened and closed again; but no

footsteps but the servant's sounded in the passage. Dora glanced at the clock on the mantelpiece. "He won't be home yet," she said; "we needn't be so frightened."

"Look here," said Archie, after another but a shorter silence, "would it be worse for you, Dora, if I told the truth?"

"The truth? What truth? To whom?"

She asked the questions with a slight, a very slight revival of interest.

"You know the lie I told to Tom," he said.

"Yes," she said, relapsing into listlessness; "you meant it well. I never thanked you."

"Well," he said, "what I want to know is this. Would it be worse for you if I told Tom that it was a lie?"

"Nothing can be worse for me," she said.

He walked up and down the room for a turn or two. "Why don't you tell him the whole thing—from beginning to end?" he asked.

She shook her head dolefully. "That's so easy to say," she said. "I can't. How can I suddenly begin to blurt out a long story, and such a story, all about my idiotcy, when he never gives a sign of supposing that there is any story at all. I can see his look of surprise, as I began; I can hear him interrupt me, by saying that he needs no explanation. I could as well think of dashing my poor hands against a rock. 'Qui s'excuse, s'accuse:' that would be in his mind, and I should know it. I should stumble and turn red, and tell my tale so badly that he could not help thinking that it was not true. No, Archie, I can do nothing. That is what I ought always to have known—that I was a weak fool and only safe in doing nothing."

"No, no," said Archie, "that's all stuff. Forgive me, Dora, but you know, we all know how clever you are. Among us we have made a mess of this business; but I am sure that it will all come right, and soon."

If Archie spoke more confidently than he felt, it had but small effect on Dora's depression.

"I am going away now," he said. "I won't take your decision now, for you would say Yes to anything. But you must cheer up, Dora, when I have gone, and make up your mind. I will come back to-morrow, and you shall tell me then if I may tell Tom that it was not I who was in that room that night. He will be very angry, but I can't help believing, as I always have believed, that truth is best. I can't think how I lied then; I have no

habit of lying. If I tell Tom the truth, I think that the whole story will come out, and I do hope and believe that good will come of it."

Dora listened to him with a most uncertain attention. She was absorbed for the time in the contemplation of her own misfortunes, deep in that abyss of desolation wherein sanguine happy spirits are so amazed to find themselves. A long life of lovelessness lay before her, and down this monotonous vista she gazed and gazed.

Archie took her lifeless hand and pressed it hard. "Good-bye," he said, "till to-morrow. Then you shall tell me if I may speak."

"Good-bye," she said sadly, listening, even as she spoke, for her husband's ring.

(To be concluded.)



The Education of the Future.



(DISCUSSED AT THE CLOUGHS' DINNER-TABLE,
SEPT. 10, 1990.)

"It's a capital idea! the thing ought to be commemorated. At any rate, we can give a little dinner in honour of it. Whom shall we have?"

"Dr. and Mrs. Oldcastle, and Harry's form-master, young Mr. Hilyard, and his wife, will represent school-work; *we* shall stand for parents in general; and with Dr. and Mrs. Brenton for our medical advisers, and the Dean and Mrs. Priestly to witness for things spiritual, we shall be quite a 'representative gathering.' Will my list do?"

"Famously! Couldn't be better! We all know the subject and each other. I shouldn't wonder if we have some good things said."

Mr. Clough was a City merchant, as had been his fathers before him for four or five generations; he was reputed wealthy, and was a rich man, but one who held his wealth as a public trust, reserving for personal uses only what should keep his family in refined and comfortable living. Not that there was much virtue in this, for he, and others like him, held in aversion luxurious living, and whatever savoured of the "barbarous opulence" of earlier days. Dr. Oldcastle was the Head Master of an old-established foundation school; for the remaining guests they have been sufficiently introduced by Mr. Clough.

During the dinner, there was the usual gay talk, and some light handling of grave subjects, until the ladies retired. Then—

"I wonder, gentlemen, has it occurred to you why my wife and I have been so pertinacious in trying to get you here to-night?"

Every one's countenance showed that he was struck by an interesting recollection.

"A little circumstance connected with this room, and a

certain date that I fear I may have mentioned more than once or twice?"

"Oh, to be sure," said the Dean; "haven't I said a dozen times to my wife, 'There's but one thing that Clough plumes himself on—that the Fathers' and Mothers' Club was born in his dining-room!'"

"But why to-night, more than any other night?"

"Why, to-night is the hundredth anniversary of that great event!" A good-humoured smile passed round. "Yes, gentlemen, I know I'm house-proud, and give you leave to laugh. But would not you cherish an old-fashioned house in a by-street, when it's the one thing that links you to history?"

"But, my dear fellow, why in the world should this Club, with the stuttering initials (how I hate initials!) be glorified? It does not get in my way, as a Head-master, it's true; but, mind you, a man can't play up to his Busby in the face of it! There was a man for his calling! How he'd walk over your 'F. M. C.s.' Fumble! aye, that's the word. Knew 'F. M. C.' reminded me of something!"

"I'm slow to see how our Club links us with history, certainly," murmured Dr. Brenton, reflectively.

"Why, in this way: if the Club did not initiate, it certainly marked a stage in the progress of the great educational revolution in which we have been moving for the last hundred years. Wait for two or three centuries, and you will find this revolution of ours written down as the 'New Education,' just as some one gave the happy name of the 'New Learning' to the revival of letters in the Dark Ages."

"Sorry to disoblige you, but I'm afraid none of us sees his way to more than a century of waiting, though it be to verify the statements of his best friend. But go on, old fellow, I'm with you! Make the 'revolution' plain sailing for us."

"Thanks, Hilyard; your sanction emboldens me! But which am I to 'go on' with, the word or the thing?"

"A distinction *with* a difference. If I say 'the thing,' off we go to the Dark Ages themselves; and shall come out to find the ladies cloaked and hooded in the hall!"

"A thing endurable to us elder Benedicts!"

"Now, Doctor! As if you weren't tied to Mrs. Oldcastle's apron-string every minute you're not in school. Fanny and I follow you for encouragement when we feel our bond growing slack!"

"To order, gentlemen, to order! or we shall get neither word nor thing. We shall all want to put in an oar anent 'my wife and I.'"

"Brenton's right. Seer! take up thy parable, and go ahead!"

"Who would condemn a behest of the Church?" (with a bow which threatened a candle-shade, deftly saved by Hilyard.) "I go ahead; I'm not to talk about the thing, but the name. Why I call this, which has been working itself out in the last hundred years or more, an educational *revolution*. In the first place, what was called 'Education' a century since and what we call Education are essentially different things."

"Come, come! Isn't that rather strong? We go in for the Classics and Mathematics; and so did the schools of a hundred, or, for the matter of that, five hundred years ago. 'Tis true we have to work much more with modern languages, natural science, and other subjects of which we can give but a smattering, to the confusion alike of boys and masters. Give me a classical education, or, in default, a mathematical; 'tis training! And, for my part, I vote for the pre-Revolutionists, if that's what you choose to call them,"—with a subdued snort, which epitomised much that was not civil to the reform party.

"How much clearing of the decks must take place for even a friendly discussion! Tell us, gentlemen both, what you mean by education?"

"Mean by education, Doctor? I should not have thought our united wisdoms need be called on to answer that! A boy is educated when he knows what every gentleman should know, and when he is trained to take his place in the world."

"Dr. Oldcastle's definition suits me as well as another. Putting aside the polite acquirements, the question turns on the training—how much it includes, and how it is to be given."

"There you have it, Clough," put in Dr. Brenton; "and my contention is, that you owe the incalculable advance in *character* which has taken place in the period we are considering entirely to us doctors. Wasn't it we who found out for you that you were all blundering in the dark; that you hadn't even set your feet on the scientific basis of education; that all your doings were tentative? About a hundred years ago, men spent a third of a lifetime on mathematics. Cambridge made men Senior Wranglers in those days, and perhaps the distinction was worth the work. But the world said, in that weighty way in which the world likes to talk;—'Mathematics afford a mental discipline, a

fortifying of character, which no other study gives.' Now I'm not denying the work of mathematics as a factor in education ; but look at your mathematician ; do you find him more to the fore, more his own master, than other men ? Often enough he is irritable, obstinate, all the more wrong-headed the more he's in the right. But now *we* (observe the *we*—royalty itself couldn't make more of it), find you fumbling about blindly, snatching up now this tool, now that, natural science, languages, or what not, in order to work upon material you knew nothing about, was it mind, or morals, or what ? To effect issues you had not determined on—intellectual power ? Force of character ? In the slough we found you—parent, schoolmaster, parson—all whose business is, more or less, the bringing up of the young ; and what have we done for you ? Why, we've discovered to you the nature of the material you have to work upon, the laws according to which it must be wrought. We have even put it into your hands as clay in the hands of a potter, and we've shown you what is the one possible achievement before you ; that is, *the elevation of character*. Education which fails to effect this, effects nothing. There, that's what *we've* done. Every man to his trade, say I ; and there's nothing like leather !”

“Well, but, but,—all this is very fine talk ; but what demonstration can you give ? And where in the world have I been while all this is going on ? Pshaw ! You delude yourselves, my dear friends. This airy talk makes flighty brains ; but do you suppose I've been a schoolmaster these forty years while all this has been going on, and yet know nothing of it ?”

“That comes of fumbling over our F. M. C., instead of holding us up with both hands. But, honour bright, Dr. Oldcastle, do you see in these days any change in the manner of boy that comes to your hands fresh from his home ?”

“Yes, yes ! a thousand times, yes !”

“If Mr. Hilyard's courtesy had permitted me to answer for myself, I, also, should have said ‘yes.’ I see a most remarkable change upon which society is to be congratulated. But what would you have ? Civilization and education must of necessity produce results, appreciable even within a single life-time.”

“Don't you think, Doctor, you might have made a trilogy of it, and promoted Christianity ?” interposed the ever suave and gentle tones of the Dean. “I myself feel with Dr. Brenton, ‘every man for his master,’ and would fain lay every advance at the feet of Christ.”

"I must beg the Dean to look over a little assumed pugnacity. That we all agree with him, he may rest assured. And for this reason. Every other avenue towards perfection leads you, after weeks or months or years of delightful going, to a blank wall. You see nothing beyond ; all that remains is to retrace your steps, and retrogression is always bitter. You try through Christ, and find yourself in the way of endless progress cheered by perennial hope. But the talk is growing serious. We of the 'New Education' party take to ourselves the credit of the advances Dr. Oldcastle perceives, and as testimony from an alien is very valuable, perhaps he would not mind telling us in detail what differences he perceives between the young boys of to-day, and their kind of forty years ago?"

"Let me consider a moment ; your question is not easy to answer in a breath. . . . Well, in the first place, they are more apt to learn : I conceive that there has been an extraordinary advance in intelligence during the last half-century. The work we would grind over for hours in my day, these youngsters have at their finger-ends in half an hour, and are on the alert for more. I do believe they have a real appetite for knowledge—a weakness of which not more than one or two in a hundred was guilty when I was a boy."

"Will you let me, as a parent, give you our explanation of these facts? For, with deference to Dr. Brenton, who justly claims so much for his craft, I think we parents deserve a pat, too. You may bring a horse to the well, but you can't make him drink. The advance, I think, is not in intelligence, but in power of attention. This, the Fathers' and Mothers' Club and its agencies recognises as the practical power of man ; that which makes all the difference between the able and successful man, and the poor lag-last. And yet it is not a faculty, but is the power and habit of concentrating every faculty on the thing in hand. Now this habit of attention parents, mothers especially, are taught to encourage and cultivate in their children from early infancy. What you regard with full attention, if only for a minute, you know, and remember always. Think of the few scenes and conversations we all have so vividly fixed that we cannot possibly forget them. Why? because at the moment our attention was powerfully excited. You reap some benefit from this early training directly the boy goes to school. The psychologists—not your craft, this time, Doctor—tell us that enormous curiosity, a ravenous appetite

for knowledge, is as natural to children as bread-and-milk hunger. Put the two together; the boy has an eager desire to know—has the power of fixing his whole mind on the new thoughts set before him, and it's as easy as A B C; of course he learns with magical quickness. The field has been ploughed by the parents, and you have only to sow your seed."

"H'm! it sounds rational; I must think it over. Anyway, the results are pleasant enough. Four hours a day instead of six or seven—and much more work done, mind you—is good for both masters and boys. Then most of them have resources and are on nobody's hands. You'd be astonished to hear how much these fellows know, and each has his speciality. One little chap has butterflies, for instance. Ah, that reminds me! Don't tell, or I might be invited to resign; but I don't to this day know the difference between a moth and a butterfly. It's the sort of thing one ought to know, so I set up a classification of my own, no doubt correct, because it was mine! Well, this befell me. 'What have you there?' I asked a little chap, who had evidently netted a prize. 'A moth, sir, the ——,' scientific name, pat. 'A moth, boy! That beautiful creature is no moth! Moths live in houses!' You should have seen the fellow suppress his grin! I couldn't ask, so don't know now; but make a point of not meeting that little chap's eye. A friend of mine, a Fellow of his College, was worse. 'I say, Oldcastle, the poets make a mighty pother about the song of the lark. Now, do tell me—do you know it when you hear it?' But as for the boys that enter now, there's not the natural object that they don't both recognise and know all about. Their collections are of scientific worth—at least, so that fellow Hilyard thinks, so we are going in for a museum of local natural history!"

"Why, Dr. Oldcastle, you're like the man in the play, who talked prose all his life, and at last found it out! You're our warmest friend, though you decline the connection. This, again, is the work of mothers following the lines of the 'New Education.' We make a great point of developing intelligent curiosity in the children about all that lives and grows within their ken. For instance, I should think most of 'our' mothers would feel disgraced if her child of six were not able to recognise any ordinary British tree from a twig with *leaf-buds* only. It's nature's lore, and the children take to it like ducks to the water. The first seven or eight years of their lives are spent out of doors—in possible weather—learning this sort of thing, instead of pottering

over picture-books and A B C. But do fill the witness-box a minute longer. All this is delicious! An outsider who speaks with authority is worth a score of partisans!"

"I bow my thanks, Clough, for the handsome things you are good enough to say. Of course my impartial witness would be quite as valuable if it told on the other side! Why, Hilyard, you're nowhere! 'Tis I am the man of the day. But no; he's the go-ahead fellow, and I'm the drag; yet a drag has its uses."

"Granted, if you go down hill! But out of thine own mouth art thou convicted, most learned Master! What hast thou talked all this night but progress? But one thing more: tell us, do you find these Admirable Crichtons of yours the least in the world priggish? Or are they namby-pamby youths, who do as they're bid, and haven't much taste for unlawful adventure?"

"Taste for adventure! Why, little fellows of nine come, able to swim, row, ride, do everything man or boy needs do, and how are fellows of that sort to be kept out of adventures! But they do as they're bid, I grant you, and the way they do it shows fifty times the spirit of the fellows who shirked. Mind, I'm speaking of the boys who have been brought up at home, not of those who have 'growed!' But don't run away with the notion that the best of them are perfect. We must be *at it* all the time, or the ground gained is gone from under our feet."

"Look, look! do look at Brenton! something will happen if he doesn't get an innings!"

"Gentlemen, you must, you really must, hear me on this matter! You must let me show Dr. Oldcastle the 'reason why' of what he observes!"

"Hear, hear! Let's have it, Doctor! Don't spare a word!"

"Well, to begin at the beginning (no! not with Adam, nor even with the Dark Ages); some five-and-twenty or so, years before Clough's *EVENT*, men of science began to grope for a clue to the understanding of this queer riddle of human nature. That action (including speech) depends on thought, and that action—repeated action—forms character, had long ago been got at by inductive processes. Now, these meddling scientific fellows were not content with, It is, because it is! they must needs come poking round with their 'everlasting—Why?' This particular 'Why' proved a most hard nut to crack; indeed, it is only within living memory that their guesses at truth have

become entirely demonstrable ; but, as early as I said, they had thus much ground under their feet—analogy and probability were altogether on their side, and it was impossible to prove, or even to show a fair case for, the contrary view. These scientists perceived that they were undermining the methods, the aims, the very idea of education as popularly held. They indicated new lines, suggested new principles. But their discoveries were to be like that corn of wheat—first they must fall into the ground and die. Years passed before educationists woke up to what had been done. At last it dawned upon them that it was now possible to formulate a *science of education* ; to propose laws which should work out definite ends with mathematical certainty. The days of casual bringing-up were numbered. A basis, and that a physical basis, was found. The principle which underlies the possibility of all education was discovered to them as it is to us to-day. They were taught that the human frame, brain as well as muscle, *grows to the uses it is earliest put to*. In a hundred years, we have advanced no further in principle, but we have applied the principle in many directions. It is, indeed, hardly possible to get beyond the ground covered by this so simple sounding axiom : that is, it is hardly within our power to overstate the possibilities of education. *Anything* may be made of a child by those who first get him into their hands. No doubt, propagandism becomes the immediate duty of any who have perceived a saving principle for the race. And efforts were made in many directions to bring before parents of all classes the notion that the formation of habits is the chief part of education. Our host's EVENT is one of these efforts, and the Parents' Club spread like wildfire ; every one was ready for it, because people were beginning to feel the wretched uncertainty of the casual method. How is it, they asked, that, bring up two boys in the same way, and one turns out a villain, the other, a credit to his family ? Now, the 'New Education' deals entirely with individuals ; not with children, but with the child ; the faulty habit is supplanted, observe the word, the desirable habit produced, within a definite period, say a month or so ; and then the parents' easy work is to keep the child upon the lines of habit thus produced."

"Now, stop a minute, Doctor, stop a minute ! I'm afraid I'm about to lose my easily won laurels. You, who are a classical scholar, must know how familiar to the mind both of Roman and Greek was this doctrine of habit. Again, a poet of our

own, an eighteenth-century man, wasn't he Dryden? expresses capitally the time-out-of-mind English feeling on this subject—

“Children, like tender osiers, take the bow,
And, as they first are fashion'd, always grow;
For what we learn in youth, to that alone
In age we are by second nature prone.”

“Most happy; but, don't you see, Dr. Oldcastle, I began by admitting that people have always had a notion that they must bring up their children in good habits, and suppress faulty ones. But now, they have something more than a notion; they have scientific certainty. And, instead of dawdling through the whole period of childhood with spasmodic efforts to get a boy to tie his shoe-strings fast, they take it in hand once and for all, keep incessant watch for the week or two it will take to form the habit, and then the thing is done with for a life-time. The new habit once formed, the parent's part is no more than to watch against chance returns to the old ways until the habit is ingrained in the stuff of the child's character. Now, don't you see that this is a very different thing from the desultory way in which a child was allowed to try off and on for a habit all his days, and never got it?”

“I admit there's a difference; it tallies, too, with what I notice in the young boys who enter with us. You mean that their mothers have definitely set themselves for a month or two, say, to form a habit—now obedience, now truthfulness, now attention, and so on—and that is why the boys come to me with *character*, not mere disposition?”

“Yes, that's what I mean; and it's on these lines we have been advancing for a whole century. In another direction, too, education has been going forward; but, here, we have only analogy to guide us, not yet certainty. It cannot be predicated as yet, whether we are simple or complex beings, whether in each of us is bound up one life or several. It is not impossible, for instance, that, just as our physical life is sustained because multitudinous organisms come to life, feed, grow, multiply, and die, perpetually in our substance, so, perhaps what we may call our immaterial life is sustained by multitudinous lives such as our philosophy has never dreamed of. An idea, for instance, what is it? We don't know yet; but this we know, that every idea we get is quick within us as a living being, that it feeds, grows, multiplies, and then, behold, it is no more! There are bodies natural and there are bodies spiritual. Perhaps this sort of thing

is too immature to be pressed into service. But of other parts of us, to which names and ideas of something like personality are attached—conscience, will our spiritual being—this it is quite safe to assert: they thrive upon their appropriate meat and work, they perish of inanition and idleness. This, too, we take into our scheme of education, and with great results."

The Dean got up:—

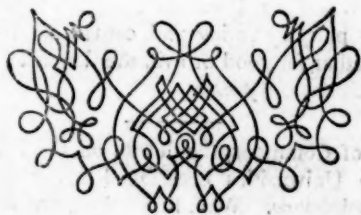
"I, for one, must heartily thank Dr. Brenton for his most suggestive lecture. No, don't look 'castigated,' Doctor; 'tis a lecture for weight and worth, but of commendable brevity. Speaking for the 'cloth,' I should like to say how much we owe to this educational revolution. A century ago, our Church was supposed to show some signs of decadence; to-day she is *quick* to her remotest extremities. And why? simply because she has gone with the times in following up the advances of the 'New Education.' She, with the rest of you, perceives that the world has ever one great thing to do—to bring up the young in advance of the generation before them; that the sole valuable inheritance the present has to leave behind is—exalted national character. Wherefore, she has laboured assiduously on the two lines Dr. Brenton emphasizes to-night—'that Habit is *ten* natures;' and, that the spiritual life must flourish or decay as it is duly fed and exercised, or allowed to lie idle and unfed. Therefore, is every clergyman instructed, above all, to minister to the young of his parish—of all classes. The growing soul cannot thrive upon husks—therefore must the truth be divested of the husks of the past, and clothed upon with the living thought of the present. The young soul must be taught its work, the spiritual exercises of prayer and praise, the bodily exercise of service; and as no man can teach what he does not know, the minister to the young must be qualified and ever active in these. Seeing these and kindred truths, our clergy are raising up about them a body of ardent young spirits to whom self-sacrifice is a law; labour in spiritual uplands a necessity. And for much of this progress, I say, we are indebted to the labours of the 'New Educationists,' whom we therefore gladly hold up with both hands."

"This is very gratifying hearing; we have all along been very sensible of the cordiality and helpfulness of the clergy, who so commonly throw in their lot with us. But that we should be doing them some service all the time—this is news indeed! May I imitate the Dean, and say a word professionally? We

doctors have reaped where we sowed—and abundantly. In the old days, families had each 'their doctor,' who was called in now and then to do battle with disease which had already made headway. But now, people are beginning to see that low vitality, poor physique, and even organic disease—hereditary or other—are very commonly the results of faulty education, or bringing up, if that is the better way of putting it. What is the consequence? Why, the doctor is retained, like husband or wife, for sickness and health: he is the medical adviser by the year, or usually by the life-time. He thrives not on sickness, but upon health. Drops in on his clients unawares, finds one girl doubled up over a book, another standing on one foot, notes the hectic flush and bright eye of this child, the tendency to drowsiness in that—the flabby arms and quick intelligence of the little town-bred family, the stolid dulness of the farmer's boy—for rich and poor come in course to him. He does not wait for disease to be set up, but averts the tendency; and, though he has found no elixir of life, nor means of averting death—this, he may almost venture to promise his clients, that so long as they live, they shall live with eye not waxed dim, nor natural force abated. And all this because he knows that the body, too, must have its education, its careful regulation, and that bone and muscle and vital organs alike grow to the *habits* you set up in them."

Mr. Hilyard had been using his pencil for the last few minutes, and was evidently preparing to show on what lines the schools, too, had been advancing during this age of many revolutions, when—"Tis eleven o'clock, and the ladies!" brought the discussion to an end.

CHARLOTTE M. MASON.



Notes of the Month.

THE 6th of May is an anniversary not to be forgotten by any who were present at the dedication of Epping Forest to the public on that day in the year 1882. It was an early season, and the great mass of woodland wore its freshest and greenest garb. The weather was ideally bright and beautiful. The great amphitheatre, where the ceremony took place, was crowded with gaily-dressed spectators. The long route of the procession was lined by a cheering throng of enthusiastic East-enders. The Queen was in the highest spirits, and the whole function passed off with the most brilliant success. The late Mr. W. H. O'Sullivan, Nationalist M.P. for the county of Limerick, had never seen Her Majesty before, and the sight touched his latent loyalty. "Please God," he exclaimed to an English M.P. who was standing by him, "we shall soon see something like this in Ireland! We have entered at last on the right path. *You will hear no more of the Irish difficulty.*"

Within an hour of the time of speaking, Lord Frederick Cavendish and Mr. Burke fell beneath the assassins' knife in the Phoenix Park, and the "Irish difficulty" entered on its acutest phase.

The anniversary was accompanied this year by a sudden burst of brilliant weather, which helped to recall the scene of seven years before, and its lessons were emphasized by the proceedings of the Special Commission which was just then engaged in reviewing the events of that terrible time. It is disheartening to all good citizens, of whatever political opinions, to feel that after so much has been done and suffered, the Irish problem remains unsolved.

In Parliament, the Bill for legalizing Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister has been defeated by an increased majority; and this time the lay votes would have thrown it out, even without the intervention of the Bishops. Whether it is wise for the Heir-Apparent to the Throne to take an active part, by voting and canvassing, in an endeavour to revolutionize, whether for good or evil, the domestic life of the country, is a question which *donne à penser*.

In the House of Commons, the debate on the Parliamentary Representation of the Universities occasioned many searchings of heart among Liberal politicians. Why, they asked, are we still saddled with this anomaly, all the more distasteful because it so greatly strengthens the Conservative majority? And the answer was ruefully returned:

Because Mr. Gladstone is so strong a Conservative in many of his mental phases, that he could not reconcile himself to sweeping away University Representation when he had the chance to do so in the Franchise Bill of 1884. In many questions bearing on Religion, Education, and social life, Mr. Gladstone's restraining influence over his followers recalls the saying of the Chronicler about Queen Elizabeth's last days:—"All men pointed to the Queen's white hairs and said, 'When that snow melteth, there will be a flood.'"

Meanwhile some of the followers in question are evincing a rather mutinous spirit, and have formed themselves into a separate party, with "Whips" and organization of their own. This movement, which is mainly directed by Mr. Bradlaugh and Mr. Labouchere, is regarded with strong disfavour by the official leaders of the Liberal Party, who naturally consider it subversive of all party discipline.

The London County Council has filled the, or at any rate a, chief end of its being by voting Mr. Firth, M.P., a salary of £2000 a year. The payment is not excessive, considering the enormous amount of drudgery which the Vice-Chairmanship involves, and Mr. Firth's unwearyed industry in performing it. But the Council rightly stipulates that its principal executive officer shall give his whole time to the service of the Council, and how this stipulation can be reconciled with the parliamentary duties of the Member for Dundee is a question which the electors of Dundee must decide.

The most interesting division which has taken place in the Council, as showing the balance of opinion among its members on a social problem of pressing moment, was one which involved the question of renewing the license of a public-house which the Council had acquired. There was a majority of more than three to one in favour of closing the house, even at a loss of some two thousand pounds paid for the goodwill of the business.

The decision of the Archbishop of Canterbury that he has the competence to try the charges against the Bishop of Lincoln, had been generally anticipated by those who read between the lines of the Dean of Windsor's letters to the *Times*. It now remains to be seen if the Bishop of Lincoln will apply to the Queen's Bench to restrain the Archbishop from exercising the jurisdiction which he claims. This course, it is understood, will be recommended by the Bishop's legal advisers; but it is difficult to see how the Bishop can follow it, consistently with his known opinions about secular interference in spiritual concerns. It is more probable, therefore, that the Bishop will acquiesce in the Archbishop's assumed jurisdiction, and will defend his conduct on its merits.

It is understood that General Boulanger is profoundly mortified by the coolness of his reception in London. A dinner-party given by Lady Burdett-Coutts, though in itself a most graceful hospitality, hardly realizes the "brav' Général's" dreams of triumphant progresses, popular demonstrations, and acclaiming crowds. But in truth he reckoned without his hosts. The English people may not be particularly enamoured of the Republican form of government, but they are loyal friends to established order, and have scant sympathy with pretenders and revolutionaries, however designated or disguised.

One of the noblest lives ever lived on earth has been closed by the death of Father Damien, the Apostle of the Lepers. Such a career of absolute and calculated sacrifice, carried to its consummation in premature and ghastly death, recalls the proudest achievements of early Christianity, and enriches with another illustrious example the Church's ever-lengthening roll of Saints and Martyrs.

From a number of suggestions that have reached us as to German novels likely to interest our readers, the following brief list has been compiled, but we must disclaim any responsibility for the selection :—

Auerbach—'Barfüßle.'	Lindau—'Herr und Frau Beuer.'
Ebers—'Uarda.' 'Homo Sum.'	U. v. Manteuffel—'Das Majorat.'
N. v. Eschtruth—'Polnisches Blut.'	'Seraphina.' 'Mark Albrecht.'
'Gänseliesel.'	Marlitt—'Die zweite Frau.' 'Das Haide prinsesschen.'
Freytag—'Die verlorene Handschrift.'	Spielhagen—'Auf die Düne.'
W. Heimbürg—'Ihr einzige Bruder.'	C. Werner—'Gluck Auf.'
'Ein armes Fraulein.'	

NOTES FROM PARIS.

"What will your Majesty please to wear?
Coats of yellow, green, or brown—
What will your Majesty please to wear?"

The above anxious enquiry will no longer seem absurd, for the coloured dress-coats are gaining ground in Paris, since the ball given by Mme. de Kersaint and that of the Duchesse de Noailles. The favourite shades seem to be *mauve* and *noisette*, or nut-brown, also blue; the red coats too, are in favour, but the *mauve* and *noisette* had the highest patronage. Of course only the "*jeunesse dorée*" tried the experiment; the "serious" part of the guests were faithful to the usual sombre evening dress. There is a considerable amount of discussion on this important subject; it is feared that great expense and increased frivolity will be the result, bringing husband's bills up to the figure of the wife's. What these are

in fashionable Parisian circles, may be judged from the accounts sent in to the Marquis d' A—— by his wife's tradesmen, which were brought before the public in consequence of his refusal to pay. We will only quote a few items :

From the 29th February, 1888, to the 17th March, the fair Marquise had received from Mme. Virot, Rue de la Paix, eleven hats and bonnets, amounting to a sum of 17,578 frs.

From another well-known house :

A few articles of fancy under-clothing, 4600 frs.

Two tea-gowns, 1350 frs.

Dress-maker's bill, 65,629 frs.

The sum total of debts incurred by the fair Marquise in the space of less than one year amounted to 157,479 frs. (about £6293), besides what she had paid for !

The unfortunate husband was condemned to pay, as responsible for his wife's acts ; but the bills were considerably reduced by decision of the Court.

It is, however, unnecessary to state that it is possible to dress very well, less extravagantly. Many "reasonable" belles have their *toilettes* at the "*Trois-Quartiers*,"* which has a first-rate dress-making establishment attached to the house. There is nothing of the "shop" style here ; everything is beautifully made and thoroughly well finished, in excellent taste, for a much lower price than would be charged by a fashionable *couturière*. But only cash is accepted.

The Directoire "Coat" opening over a plain skirt, seems very generally adopted at present, in the strange shades of colour now in favour ; the dingy copper colour, called "*vieux rose*" blended with the crude, really hideous green, now seen everywhere. Mme. Carnot's toilette at the opening of the Exhibition was considered "exquisite ;" her choice was, however, *blue* brocade, opening over a "*vieux rose*" skirt ; the bonnet with a wreath of geraniums in "*vieux rose* ;" but who ever saw copper-coloured geraniums ?

The Directoire hats, with large turned-up front, are worn usually by young girls ; they are not becoming, and give a bold look. The round Trianon hats, wreathed with flowers, are much more graceful ; branches of flowers and leaves are carelessly (but inimitably) thrown over them, often resting on soft white tulle sprigs of exquisite roses ; others of poppies and corn-flowers ; strawberries with flowers and leaves, pink horsechestnut blossoms, also with the leaves ; but always as if branches had been plucked and flung across the hat "anyhow," though, in fact, with exquisite art. Bonnets, or *capotes*, as the close bonnet is called, are still small, and are little more than a wreath of flowers mingled with lace or tulle. Often the whole bonnet seems made of flowers ; a wreath of acacia-blossoms in front, and long trails mingled with leaves falling

* Boulevard de la Madeleine.

over the back ; lilies of the valley, with the large leaves covering the crown ; honeysuckle, in the same style, and many others.

The Exhibition engrosses all thoughts, and seems the only present interest. Politics are dozing, and will not be roused till the elections. No one seems to think or talk of General Boulanger, who would do well to remember the French saying : " Les absents ont tort." Paris is very full, and everything seems to be done in view of foreign visitors. The theatres are taking up old attractions and reviving plays formerly successful. At the Comédie Française " Maître Guérin " is one of Got's greatest triumphs ; the reality of the character created is perfectly wonderful, though perhaps the full force of the interpretation would not be sufficiently evident to foreigners, who have had no opportunity of falling in the way of the French provincial lawyer, so vividly depicted.

Hamlet, interpreted by Mounet-Sully, with very remarkable talent, is interesting as a comparative study of the French and English rendering of Shakespeare's hero. Many very good English judges have been enthusiastic in their praises of Mounet-Sully, an artist of undoubted genius, though often somewhat erratic.

Two reading-rooms have been opened for the use of visitors to the Exhibition ; one near the Pavillon des Beaux Arts, towards the Avenue de La Bourdonnais ; the other (where the newspapers of *all* nations may be read gratuitously) is on the Esplanade des Invalides, by the Pagoda of Angkor.

In our list of Pensions in the May number we inadvertently omitted to give the address of Madame Bellot-Carol's establishment ; 24 Rue Boccador. It is especially to be recommended to ladies.

A great curiosity of the present time is the splendid Hôtel Terminus, still unfinished, and in every respect in such a state of *newness* that it is, as yet, far from desirable as a residence. But when sufficiently " seasoned," it will be like a palace in a fairy-tale, even to the invisible attendants, for in every apartment a miniature lift, concealed in the wall, brings everything wished for and requested by means of a telephone, without communicating visibly with any one. Hot and cold water at hand ; electric light ; beds constantly renewed and cleaned by vapour ; shelves and drawers lined with white enamel ; in short, every imaginable complication of comfort and convenience will be found in this enchanted abode. What price must be paid for all this is not yet stated ; and at any rate the Exhibition time will not be a fair criterion of the usual terms.

Our Library List.

ROGERS AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES, by P. W. CLAYDEN (2 vols. 24s. *Smith & Elder*), will take a high place among the class of books to which it belongs. In continuation of a former work by the same author, it treats of the second and more interesting half of the banker-poet's life, when he was established as the oracle of Holland House, and a central figure in literary and intellectual London. Mr. Clayden has, wisely we think, not confined himself to unpublished materials, but has gathered into one focus much that has already appeared in contemporary memoirs; his book thereby gains in completeness more than it loses in freshness, and when all deductions have been made, there is a large residue of new information concerning celebrities great and small, and a goodly collection of their letters. One of the chief features in the book are the numerous letters of Wordsworth, who was for many years a close friend of Rogers, and did not hesitate to tell him home truths on occasion. Mr. Clayden has successfully shown that his hero, in spite of his reputation for maliciousness, could be very kind to those whom he liked. Probably his satiric flashes were designed rather to illustrate his own cleverness than to injure his victims. Possibly these lively volumes will create a demand for 'Italy' and the 'Pleasures of Memory.'

HALF A CENTURY OF MUSIC IN ENGLAND. By FRANCIS HUEFFER. (1 vol. 8s. *Chapman & Hall*.) Dr. Hueffer evidently believed in "influence" as the maker of History, at any rate in the sphere of Music. In his masterly introductory sketch of the last fifty years, we find much from which encouragement may be gathered for our future as a musical nation—"here at least everything is fresh and hopeful, and the English prophet need no longer fear the contempt of his countrymen" or his foreign contemporaries. In three excellent essays Dr. Hueffer discusses the three great masters with whose memories the movement known as the "Music of the Future" will for ever be associated—Wagner, Liszt, and Berlioz. The story of Wagner's early visit to England and comparative failure, though somewhat familiar, is interestingly told, and many musical amateurs may not remember that "the master" once held an English position as Conductor of the Philharmonic Society. The opinions of the late musical critic of the *Times* as a Wagner

partisan, are too well-known to require discussion; time alone can show whether or no he is correct in the idea, that Wagner's greatness has for the present ruined dramatic music, in the same sense that Beethoven for a long period ruined symphonic music. The inclination to disagree even with such experience as Dr. Hueffer's, is strong within us, with the work of one young dramatic composer before us.

What Wagner did for the musical drama, Liszt has endeavoured to do for orchestral and instrumental music, namely, to represent poetic ideas by the medium of certain sounds. In the essays on Wagner and Liszt, Dr. Hueffer went over well-trodden ground, but the chapters devoted to Berlioz contain a good deal of fresh matter. The book altogether is a mine of condensed information, concerning the last fifty years of music in England. It is much to be regretted, that the promised subsequent volume on "English Music" can never see light, owing to the death of the gifted writer, whose life was so consistently devoted to furthering those views of music, on which, in his opinion, hung the future of the art.

TRAVELS IN THE ATLAS. By JOSEPH THOMSON. (1 vol. 9s. *G. Philip.*) How much Mr. Thomson may have added to the sum of geographical knowledge by his recent journey in the Atlas, we are unable to say; but the literary harvest is inconsiderable. One or two scenes, indeed, Mr. Thomson has photographed for us in words more clearly than he has focussed others with his camera. The feudal life at Teluet, the extraordinary feats of the snake-charmer, and the furtive ascent of Ogdint, form welcome oases in the desert of common-place exploration. But does Mr. Thomson think the British public will enjoy a page about one of his bad nights, or care greatly about his quarrels with refractory servants? We are convinced that the Author, who has already done right good work in Africa, and will, we hope, do more, is conveying a thoroughly bad impression of himself; but from the only evidence before us we are bound to say that, in spite of his indomitable pluck and perseverance, his conduct on several occasions may well have contributed in no small degree to the lively suspicion with which Europeans are regarded in Morocco.

DEVERILL'S DIAMOND, by ADELINE SERGEANT (2 vols. *Hurst & Blackett*), opens sensationally with two attempted murders and a ruthless execution of rude justice in the wilds of South Africa; the scene of the story is quickly changed to a homeward-bound steamer, and thence to England. The chief interest of the book lies in the plot which it would therefore be unfair to reveal. Suffice it to say that it centres round a magnificent diamond owned by an aged miner, and appropriated by more than one of the other actors in the narrative, and also round the fortunes of a beautiful girl, Lady Eleanor Monckton,

who passes through many trials, some not wholly undeserved. The book may be described as a good, if not very remarkable novel, suited for readers who care more for thrilling episodes than for skilful character-drawing. Clifford Vargrave is a quite impossible villain; Philip Lorraine a husband who carries long-suffering to the verge of imbecility.

THE TWO CHIEFS OF DUNBOY. By J. A. FROUDE. (1 vol. 6s. *Longmans*.) To the advertisement of this book as a new novel there ought in justice to be added "without a heroine." We prefer to regard it as an allegory, drawn from other days, but fraught with a valuable moral for our own time. That Ireland is a land blessed with vast potentialities of wealth, but peopled by an idle and thriftless race; that the "plantation" system can work wonders if consistently followed out and supported; that in case of trouble with France, the country, if free from English control, would certainly become the refuge of French privateers and possibly the avenue for a serious invasion:—these are the lessons which Mr. Froude contrives to whisper in the sympathetic reader's ear, while Colonel Goring and Morty Sullivan are exchanging hard knocks on the Kerry coast. Like all stories with a purpose, there is a sense of illusion and artificiality vitiating the most realistic scenes, and, on the whole, we cannot help feeling that Mr. Froude is more at home with what his enemies might call fictitious history, than in the realm of historical fiction.

THE AWAKENING OF MARY FENWICK, by BEATRICE WHITBY (3 vols. *Hurst & Blackett*), is evidently a first book by a young author, and as such shows promise. This is the plot: Mary Manser, an heiress, marries Godfray Fenwick, and in the train, after the wedding, accidentally discovers that her fortune has been his chief attraction. Whereupon she determines to have as little as possible to do with her husband, and he consents, while insisting for the sake of appearances that they should inhabit the same house, to meet her only at meal times, and on the footing of an acquaintance. When this arrangement has been adhered to for some months without exciting any very marked comment, the husband and wife, who had been falling deeper and deeper into love with each other, are reconciled and live happy ever after. The plot is not the book's strong point, which rather consists in the drawing of characters that in less preposterous circumstances would be natural and pleasing enough. Cicely, the bride's youngest sister, is a sprightly *ingénue*, and there are two children of the little Lord Fauntleroy type. The style is far too diffuse.

THE WING OF AZRAEL. By MONA CAIRD. (3 vols. *Trübner*.) In the preface to her present work Mrs. Caird disclaims any polemical

purpose, and declares that her object is merely to give a true picture of certain possible human beings. We confess that we have never come across anybody even remotely resembling the principal characters in her pages ; however, the world is wide, other readers may have been, in this respect, less fortunate. The main plot is briefly this : Viola Sedley, in order to repair the falling fortunes of her family, marries a rich, handsome, cruel young man (whose father had inherited a baronetcy "through his mother's family"), crushing a budding affection for a gentleman with a glib faculty for repartee, and a pretty knack for parodying Scripture texts. She makes no endeavour to accommodate herself to her new lot in life, keeps up a clandestine acquaintance with the parodist, and finally, on the frustration of an attempt at elopement, stabs her husband and destroys herself. The story is told with a good deal of rhetorical force, and forms an excellent pendant to "Is Marriage a Failure?"

A LONDON LIFE, AND OTHER TALES. By HENRY JAMES. (2 vols. *Macmillan*.) Mr. James has given us two volumes and four stories which are well worth the reading. The longest of the quartette is "A London Life," which microscopically analyses the situation of Laura Wing, a good American girl, who comes to England to live with her fast sister and brother-in-law, a repulsive couple with disagreeable tendencies. She sees her sister drifting towards disgrace without the power to help her, and finally follows her to Brussels, and vainly tries to save her, when, towards the end of the story, she elopes with a certain Captain Crispin. Matters are complicated by Laura's own romance with a typical young American, whom we leave patiently and indefinitely waiting for her. "The Patagonia,"—the second tale—unfolds the despair of a girl who is travelling to Europe to marry the man to whom she has been ten years engaged, but for whom she does not care. She falls in love with a heedless flirt on board "The Patagonia," and ends by jumping overboard to avoid further complications. No. III., "The Liar," is the finest etching of a charming braggart who cannot tell the truth, and who, by his habit of falsehood, deteriorates a madly-adoring and naturally candid wife ; and "Mrs. Temperly," the last story, relates the love-passages between a New York artist and an unselfish, angular American maiden, whose affection for her lover is overcome by her adoration for her mother, a good-tempered Machiavelli of the hearth-rug.

All four sketches are full of highly-condensed cleverness ; but they should be called "scenes" rather than "tales," for they are much more a collection of psychological impressions than a coherent series of events. Plot, the necessary element of story-telling, is wholly foreign to Mr. James's mind ; he has all the people for his rooms, but no house to put them into, or architectural power with which to build it.

